DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 317 326 RC 017 350

AUTHOR	Arnold, Bob
TITLE	Helping Schools Succeed at Helping All Children Learn. Report of the Senate Special Committee on School Performance, Fifteenth Alaska Legislature.
INSTITUTION	Alaska State Legislature, Juneau.
PUB DATE	Jan 89
NOTE	266p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Information Analyses (070) -- Legal/Legislative/Regulatory Materials (090)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC11 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Accountability; Educational Assessment; Educational Change; Educational Legislation; *Educational Quality; Elementary Secondary Education; *Outcomes of Education; *Public Schools; *School Effectiveness; State Action; State Surveys
IDENTIFIERS	*Alaska

ABSTRACT

This report summarizes a state senate committee's assessment of school performance in Alaska and its conclusions and recommendations to the legislature. Chapter 1 describes Alaska's school districts, school enrollment, and educational expenditures. Chapter 2 discusses school reform in America in 1983-87, Alaska's comparative lack of reform efforts, and a new state requirement for compilation of standardized test scores that may set the stage for change. Chapter 3 assesses Alaskan school performance based on standardized test scores, dropout rates, surveys of school superintendents and high school seniors, testimony gathered at seven committee hearings, inferences drawn from national assessments in specific skill areas, and consideration of population characteristics and school expenditures. Chapter 4 outlines conclusions about outcomes of education, the process of schooling, district leadership and governance, and accountability and school improvement generally; and committee recommendations for declaring the purpose of schooling and obtaining broad accountability, encouraging school- and community-based improvement, enhancing the ability of the state Department of Education to foster school improvement, and establishing a joint committee to continue the work of the special senate committee. Appendices, which make up three quarters of this document, contain extracts and summaries reviewed by committee members. (SV)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED317326

RC

Report of the

Senate Special Committee on School Performance

Fifteenth Alaska Legislature

HELPING SCHOOLS SUCCEED AT HELPING ALL CHILDREN LEARN

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Robert Arnold

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Senator William L. Hensley, Chairman

Senator Johne Binkley

Senator Ken Fanning

Senator Jim Duncan

Senator Jan Faiks

Bob Arnold, Project Director

RC017350

January 1989

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

HELPING SCHOOLS SUCCEED

AT HELPING ALL CHILDREN LEARN

Report of the

Senate Special Committee on School Performance
Fifteenth Alaska Legislature

Senator William L. Hensley, Chairman
Senator Johne Binkley
Senator Jim Duncan
Senator Jan Faiks
Senator Ken Fanning

Bob Arnold, Project Director

January 1989

Table of Contents

	INTRODUCTION	i
Chapter I.	SCHOOLING IN ALASKA Schools, districts, enrollments are described. Level of spending is high, but State contribution is falling.	1
Chapter II.	SCHOOL REFORM: AMERICA AND ALASKA Major reforms are enacted across America during 1983-87, but there are few in Alaska. Legislative requirement for compilation of test scores sets stage for change.	2
Chapter III.	SCHOOL PERFORMANCE IN ALASKA Generalized school performance is estimated on the basis of standardized tests, college entrance exams, surveys, hearings, and other indicators.	13
Chapter IV.	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS Conclusions are reached about outcomes and process of schooling, district leadership and governance, and accountability and school improvement generally. A three-part strategy is proposed. The legislature is also urged to establish a joint committee.	35
	SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS	57

Appendix: Extracts and summaries reviewed by members of the committee, June-December, 1988

APPENDIX DIRECTORY

		Page
1.	Extracts from Basic Skills Performance of Alaska's Students, Achievement Test Results for 1984-85; 1985-86; and 1986-87. Alaska Department of Education, February, 1988 (209 Pages).	64
2.	Highlights from "Arriving in Lake Wobegon: Are Standardized Tests Exaggerating Achievement and Distorting Instruction?" by Daniel Koretz, RAND Corporation, in American Educator, Summer 1988.	81
3.	Summary of Alaska High School Seniors Survey Report, 1986-87, Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education, Juneau, September, 1987 (53 Pages).	83
4.	Highlights of "Alaska ACT Assessment Results, 1986-87," American College Testing Program, Iowa City, Iowa, and a supplementary analysis prepared by the Alaska Department of Education, Juneau.	85
5.	Extract from "State Education Statistics: Student Performance, Resource Inputs, State Reforms, and Population Characteristics, 1982 and 1987, U. S. Department of Education, February 1988, wall chart.	88
6.	Highlights from American Education: Making It Work, A Report to the President and the American People, April 1988, by William J. Bennett, U. S. Secretary of Education, 60 pages.	90

7. A portrayal of school performance indicators, summarized from the Report of Committee on Coordinating Educational Research and Information, Council of Chief State School Officers, Washington, D.C., 1985. 96

8. Highlights of A Status Report: Curriculum, Construction, and Assessment in Alaska School Districts, 1987-1988. Alaska Department of Education, Juneau, 1988 (63 Pages). 98

9. Extracts on the subject of goals from A Place called School, by John I. Goodlad. McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1984 (396 Pages). 100

10. Summary of major recommendations to Alaska's State Board of Education from Effective Schooling Practices, a report of the Governor's Task Force on Effective Schooling, Juneau, 1981 (76 Pages). 106

11. Extracts from Alaska's Small Rural High Schools: Are they working? by J. S. Kleinfeld, G. W. McDiarmid, and D. Hagstrom, Institute for Social and Economic Research, Anchorage, 1985. 123

12. Summary and extracts from "Thoughts on Drop-out Prevention: A Collection of Essays by Alaskan Seniors," Alaska Department of Education, Juneau, June 1988 (23 Pages). 128

13. Extracts from Who Reads Best? Factors Related to Reading Achievement in Grades 3, 7, and 11, Educational Testing Service, February 1988 (60 Pages). 132

14. Extracts from Time for Results: The Governor's 1991 Report on Education, National Governor's Association, 1986 (171 Pages). 134

15. Extracts from "Empowering Minority Students: A framework for Intervention," by Jim Cummins, in the Harvard Educational Review, February 1986 (19 Pages). 138

16. Information about student achievement in Anchorage from "Profile of Student Performance, 1986-87," Anchorage School District, 1987 (124 Pages). 141

17. Extracts from The Forgotten Half: Non-college Youth in America, the William T. Grant Foundation Commission on Work, Family, and Citizenship, January 1988 (99 Pages). 142

18. Summary of recommendations from fifteen superintendents in replying to two questions on Senate Special Committee on School Performance Questionnaire which was mailed out to all Alaskan Superintendents. 147

19. Notes from an interview with John Bania about Buckland School, a school that is raising tested levels of achievement. 150

20. Summary of joint hearing of the Quality Education for Minorities project and this committee, Anchorage, August 26-27, 1988. 152

21. Report of the Gallup Organization of its poll on geographic literacy, July 1988. 161

22. Notes from The Mathematics Report Card: Are We Measuring Up? Educational Testing Service, June 1988 (143 Pages). 164

23. Notes from "Toward More Effective Education for Poor, Minority Students in Rural Areas: What the Research Suggests," by Robert R. Rath, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Portland, August 26, 1988 (24 Pages). 168

24. Extracts from "Computer Competence: The First National Assessment," Educational Testing Service, April 1988 (82 Pages). 171

25. Report on meeting of the Department of Education and its assessment committee with test publishers on August 13, 1988. 174

26. Alaska State Board of Education goals and initiatives (Draft II) June 13, 1988. 177

27. Notes on Alaska statutes (Title 14) that relate to school performance. 183

28. Comments on the performance of Mt. Edgecumbe High School based on student and parent views and test scores. 186

29. Extracts from Power On! New Tools for Teaching and Learning, Congress of the United States Office of Technology Assessment, Washington, D.C., September, 1988 (246 Pages). 197

30. Extracts from Dropouts in America: Enough is Known for Action, Institute for Educational Leadership, Washington, D. C., March 1987 (69 Pages). 201

31. Summary of presentations made at this committee's hearing in Juneau, October 11, 1988. 205

32. Notes on the role of broadcasting in instruction in Alaska, based on a memorandum from the Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission, September 16, 1988; "The Future of State-Supported Broadcasting in Alaska," Larry L. Pearson, 1987; "A Report to the Alaska Legislature in Response to Intent Language regarding Telecommunications in the FY 88 Operating Budget," December 1987 and a review of RATNET minutes, 1986-1988. 208

33. Summary of Responses from 14 additional superintendents to two questions on School Performance questionnaire. 213

34. Extracts from "School-Based Management: The Next Needed Education Reform," by James W. Guthrie, in Phi Delta Kappan, December 1986 (5 Pages). 216

35. Notes on Schools for the 21st Century: Project Abstracts, Washington State Board of Education, July 1988. 219

36. Summary of presentations made at this committee's hearing in Fairbanks, November 2, 1988. 226a

37. Summary of presentations made at this committee's hearing in Fairbanks, November 3, 1988. 229

38. Summary of presentations made at this committee's hearing in Anchorage, November 12, 1988. 232

39. Notes from "An Early Childhood/Parenting Strategy for Alaska," by William G. Demmert, Jr., Commissioner, Alaska Department of Education, Juneau, October 31, 1988, 15 pages. 236

40. Summary of presentations made at this committee's hearing in Nome, December 9, 1988. 238

41. Summary of presentations made at this committee's hearing in Kotzebue, December 10, 1988. 242

42. Extracts from "Linking Schools and Universities: Symbiotic Partnerships," by John I. Goodlad, Center for Educational Renewal, University of Washington, 1987, 38 pages. 245

INTRODUCTION

Most of the more than 103,000 students in Alaska's schools appear to be making reasonably acceptable progress in their schooling, as measured by standardized achievement tests and estimates made by their teachers, and several thousands of students are doing exceptionally well at the tasks the schools have set for them.

It is likely that most of this year's 7,000 seniors will graduate and go on to further education or to jobs, and several hundreds of them will win scholarships or in other ways demonstrate that their schooling has been effective in preparing them for their futures.

But too many of those who do graduate will find they possess skills sufficient only to obtain low-paying jobs, and too many will enter upon college work, find they are unprepared, and drop out in their freshman year.

Achievement test results and other indicators show that several thousands of our students of all racial and ethnic backgrounds are among the lowest achieving students in the nation in reading comprehension and mathematics, suggesting that, unless something is done, they will fall further behind in their next level of education, and, if they graduate, they are likely to face unpromising futures. And perhaps as many as one-fourth will not even graduate from high school.

Furthermore, large numbers of those who are college-bound may not be as well prepared for college as they should be, judging by

the composite scores of Alaskans on college entrance examinations and national studies that describe deficiencies of American students in knowledge and higher order thinking skills.

By spending more per student than any other state, we Alaskans have shown our commitment to education, and we are seeking performance to match it. If all teachers, schools, and districts demonstrate the qualities the best of them exhibit -- beginning with a resolution that all children can learn -- we are confident that our children can find fuller success in school today and greater promise in their futures. It is that confidence that lies behind our recommendations.

William L. Hensley, Chairman
Senate Special Committee on
School Performance

Chapter I

SCHOOLING IN ALASKA

It is Alaska's 437 public schools in 55 school districts and their more than 103,000 students that are the subject of this committee's concern.

These schools range in size from 5 students (in Igiugig) to 1,908 (in an Anchorage high school). The districts they belong to vary greatly in their enrollments, too: 47 of the 55 districts enroll fewer students than that one Anchorage high school. The median size of districts (which range from 50 students in Pelican to over 40,000 in Anchorage), is 416 students. Many elementary schools in Anchorage are larger in enrollments than half of the school districts.

More than half of all students attend schools in the Anchorage and Fairbanks areas, and another one-fourth attend schools in five other large boroughs -- Matanuska-Susitna, Kenai, Juneau, Kodiak, and Ketchikan. The other fourth attend schools in 25 other borough or city districts or in 23 rural educational attendance areas (which are, except for the exemption from local funding support, essentially the same as school districts).

Of the three specialized schools operated directly by the Department of Education, two are tuition-free general education programs. They are the Centralized Correspondence Study program, enrolling about 800 students, and the boarding school at Mt. Edgecumbe, enrolling nearly 200 students. Apart from these

students and about 2,000 students enrolled in private schools, virtually all students attend public schools in their home communities.

Most of the smallest school districts are city districts, but some rural educational attendance areas, created by the legislature in 1975 to replace a single system of schools in the unorganized borough governed by a single board, are also very small. Both the Aleutian and Chugach areas, for instance, enroll fewer than 100 students each.

Although the rural educational attendance areas are generally small in terms of enrollment, they are typically enormous in geographic size, as are several boroughs. In the northern and western parts of the state and the interior, these districts serve communities that are not on the road system and whose populations are predominantly Alaska Natives.

Only 177 of Alaska's schools are accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges. Accreditation is awarded following self-study by a school and an intensive external evaluation of factors affecting schooling outcomes.

To educate the children and youth of Alaska in 1988, school districts employed 6,379 certificated classroom teachers and 1,252 other certificated persons in positions such as superintendents, principals, and curriculum coordinators. The total number of certificated staff in 1988 was down by somewhat more than four percent from 1987.

In fiscal year 1987, State expenditures for public schools were $448.2 million, about two-thirds of the cost of operating

the public schools, the lowest State contribution in terms of percentage of the total expenditures for schooling of any year of the past ten years. Local governments spent about $178 million and the federal government contributed $51.6 million. Additional expenditures were made for capital projects.

Audited expenditures in fiscal year 1987 ranged from $4,928 per pupil in the Anchorage borough to $24,532 per pupil in the North Slope Borough.

Over the period 1977 to 1987, while the school population rose by about 13 percent, total operating expenditures for schooling rose by nearly 180 percent. Much of this increase may be attributed to rising costs, but it also went for improved teachers' salaries and for the costs of operating new schools constructed to allow rural students to attend high schools in their home communities (consistent with a judicial consent decree entered into by the State in 1976).

Before proceeding to estimate what quality of performance is obtained in Alaska's schools by these expenditures for schooling, we turn to a review of concerns and actions relating to school performance over the past five years in the nation and in Alaska.

Chapter II

SCHOOL REFORM: AMERICA AND ALASKA

With the publication of A Nation at Risk in 1983, and its declaration that education was afflicted by "a rising tide of mediocrity" there arose a widespread concern across America over the performance of public schools. This concern was deepened and broadened by numerous other studies and proposals for changes in schooling and teacher education, and, together, they led to the appointment of more than 200 task forces and special commissions to reform the schools.

As a result, in these past five years, most states have been actively engaged in what is now called the first wave of school reform. By the count of the former U. S. Secretary of Education in 1988, twelve states had enacted far-reaching and comprehensive measures to improve public education -- the Illinois statute covered 159 topics -- and five more states had carried out major reforms. Twenty-nine states had begun requiring competency tests of beginning teachers, bringing the total number of states with such a requirement to forty. Sixteen states had begun requiring competency tests of students for graduation, four requiring them for class promotion, and six states requiring them for both. Most states had increased graduation requirements and made kindergarten mandatory, and a few states had extended the school year or the school day.[1]

[1]Memorandum No. 5, p. 88.

Another important indicator by 1986 of the growing level of concern among the states about school performance was the decision of the National Governors Association (NGA) to undertake a major five-year effort to improve schooling. [2] The governors launched their effort by appointing seven task forces headed by governors, by commissioning special papers, and by conducting hearings across the nation. In its 1988 report, the NGA described a wide range of new measures being adopted by states, including:

- tightening and raising entry standards for those who want to teach;

- providing alternative routes to certification for qualified persons;

- providing financial incentives for high-performing schools;

- allowing state regulations to be waived to allow schools to be restructured or to be managed locally;

- allowing high schoolers seeking challenge to attend college courses with tuition paid by the state;

- providing increased choices for students -- especially potential dropouts -- in which schools they would attend;

- establishing a variety of pilot programs to produce

[2]Memorandum No. 14, p. 134.

increased parental involvement in schools;

- implementing innovative programs for students who are prospective dropouts;

- expanding and improving early childhood education;

- coordinating purchase, utilization, and maintenance of computers used in instruction; and

- expanding use of television for delivery of courses to rural areas.

In 1988, while applauding the changes instituted by the states, the NGA made clear in its annual report that reforms adopted by some states ought to be considered for adoption by others, and declared that some prospectively good reforms have yet to be fully explored.

In Alaska, the first wave of school reform in America had little effect, at least at the state level. During the five-year period, only one of the major changes being adopted elsewhere was adopted here -- an increase in the number of units of credit required for graduation from high schools.

Before the publication of A Nation at Risk, however, a task force of Alaskans had developed a broad prescription for improving school performance. [3] The Governor's Task Force on Effective Schooling, composed of parents, students, and educators, urged the State Board of Education in its 1982 report

[3]Memorandum No. 10, p. 106

to adopt, among other things:

- goals of education as recommended by the task force;
- a prescribed curriculum (but allowing electives) for all grade levels;
- a statement of research-based effective schooling practices as a regulation, specifying timelines for implementation;
- a monitoring program to assure district compliance with the regulation;
- revised teacher evaluation regulations to incorporate effective practices in the scope of the evaluation;
- a requirement that kindergartens be offered; and
- a calendar with an extended school year.

None of the major recommendations was adopted, and there appears to be no single reason for the board's inaction. The major recommendations would have imposed new state authority over schooling, and that prospect, for local school boards and others satisfied with the existing power relationship, may have been the important factor. But, an election also took place, and, in 1983, a new governor took office, new appointments were made to the state board of education, and a new commissioner of education was named.

The State Board of Education, however, did announce its

support of the principles of effective schooling and directed the Commissioner of Education to "inform school districts and others of the Board's commitment and enthusiasm for the establishment and maintenance of such a program."

As directed by the board, the commissioner and his staff disseminated information about the principles of effective schooling and sponsored several training workshops in 1983. Departmental support functions were organized into units for curriculum, assessment, and instruction. Activities after that time were less visible, but the principles of effective schooling continue to make important contributions to how schooling is conducted. They figure prominently in instructional leadership academies for teachers and principals sponsored by the Department of Education with the Staff Development Network, and educators from 50 districts have participated in them. In 1987, elements of effective schooling principles were incorporated into the standards for accreditation by the regional accrediting association.

Most superintendents told us, in replying to our questionnaire, that effective schooling principles were being applied in their schools. One superintendent of a high performing district said the principles were the reasons his students score so well on standardized tests. Some, however, indicated but little familiarity with the principles.

Effective schooling principles were not the only ideas contributing to changes in classrooms during the last few years in some schools and some districts. School districts employed education consultants from Alaska and other states to conduct in-service training on a wide range of subjects for teachers, and

the numerous professional associations brought celebrated educators to their conferences and conventions. In addition, education specialists of the department acted as change agents with districts in establishing the Alaska State Writing Project, the Alaska Math Consortium, the Staff Development Network, and other shared efforts to improve instruction. A number of districts increased graduation requirements, extended the school day and took other steps such as states elsewhere were taking.

Even though the State Board of Education did not adopt the goals proposed by the task force, a statewide curriculum, and principles of effective schooling as a regulation that would be monitored, the board did adopt a regulation in 1984 requiring that districts adopt a curriculum and carry out reading and math assessments, and did provide for monitoring the progress of districts in meeting those requirements. Measured against the kinds of authority being asserted by other states, the action was a limited one, but important. During these years, the department also developed curriculum guides that would serve as models for districts to follow, if they chose to do so.

Both the limited nature of the new requirement and the freedom of local districts to ignore State Board-adopted curriculum guides underscore the extent to which local control of schools is the rule in Alaska. Annual reports prepared by the department based on the monitoring are also testimony to the extent to which school boards are free to plan and conduct their school programs.[4]

Concerns over public education were, of course, being exhibited by local and state organizations in the state, and

[4]Memorandum No. 8, p. 98.

improvements in schooling were being made in some districts and some schools during the last five years. Beginning in 1987, a series of meetings were convened by the Department of Education toward building a consensus on education issues that culminated in early 1988 with adoption by the State Board of an ambitious list of goals and initiatives.[5] The Alaska Coalition on Education -- made up of representatives of the Board, school administrators, teachers, school boards, and the state PTA -- was also formed this year.

Lacking benchmark data in Alaska, no assessment of gains over these years is possible. In America generally, the result of the reforms carried out has been one of only modest gains. In the words of the former U.S. Secretary of Education:

> In short, student achievement and school performance earn a mixed grade for progress during the past five years. Despite encouraging improvements in patterns of course-taking, gains in student learning are slight and the average level of student skill and knowledge remains unacceptably low. Overall school performance is up a little bit since 1983, but by almost any standard we are still not where we ought to be.[6]

Even though the gains were slight, some progress was made. But why was policy at the state level in Alaska so little affected by the kinds of major changes sweeping America?

---

[5]Memorandum No. 26, p. 177.

[6]Memorandum No. 6, p. 90.

In part, the answer must be the strong support for local control in Alaska. As with the state graduation requirements that name fields of study (such as social studies) but do not specify courses (such as American history), or Board-adopted curriculum guides that don't have to be followed, state authorities have been largely willing to leave schooling decisions to local or regional school boards. The State legislature has defined a minimum school day and school year, named school holidays, declared who may and who must attend, and specified who may teach and who may not, but, except as required by federal legislation, has given very little guidance about what should be happening in schools or why or how schooling should be conducted.

Perhaps part of the explanation may be that there was a belief in Alaska that whatever problems of schooling that were out there could be solved by money, and for a few years, there seemed to be a lot of it. By 1984, state appropriations had grown by 80 percent over the preceding four years, and both local and federal contributions to schooling had doubled, and were continuing to rise.

Another possible explanation is that there was no substantial public outcry for reform in schooling in Alaska such as there was elsewhere, especially as there was in the large cities of the nation where there were enormous numbers of dropouts or undereducated school graduates. Those members of the Alaska public most likely to be effective activists for educational change had good grounds for being reasonably satisfied with the education of their children, and they probably knew little of the large number of undereducated children in the families of others.

On this last point, it is likely that not all Alaskans were well informed about how well or poorly students and schools were performing. Although some districts released test information to the public, some did not. And, not surprisingly, some of those that did release information organized the data to emphasize the success of their schools, not their failures.

But in 1986, the Alaska Department of Education asked for funding to collect and analyze data on student achievement. Although the funding was not granted, the legislature included intent language in the budget for the Department of Education for the following year. It read:

> It is the intent of the legislature that the assessment program use (school) districts' existing test methods and accumulate results at DOE (Department of Education). DOE will require all districts to use assessment tests if not already doing so. DOE will also require all districts to report prior years' test data so the legislature can evaluate trends in test results and not one year's information. DOE will report to the legislature on the results of this program, and what steps will be taken by this office to address the problems identified by the assessment program.

As a result, the legislature and the public would have knowledge of student and school performance across the state as measured by tests chosen by the school districts. Such information, together with a State Board of Education seriously addressing educational policy issues, would result in opening the

possibility of school reform of one sort or another coming to Alaska.

Chapter III

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE IN ALASKA

To know whether reforms in schooling are needed in Alaska requires a consideration of the current performance of schools, an assessment that should have as its yardstick the goals of schooling for Alaska. But neither the legislature nor the State Board of Education has declared a purpose of schooling or adopted a statement of goals of schooling, so such a yardstick is not at hand.

Our assessment of school performance, therefore, relies principally upon:

- results of achievement tests, whose contents imply some of the things schools are expected to teach and students are expected to learn (such as basic skills and knowledge);

- survey responses of high school seniors about their high school experiences (such as needs met and not met) and data on how many students remain in school through graduation;

- advice gathered in our seven hearings, in which Alaskans told us of their expectations of schools (such as the building of self-esteem and teaching of values, social skills, and cultures) which are important, but which lie outside of the kinds of

things measured by tests;

- information and advice provided by school superintendents in reply to our 12-part questionnaire on issues of school performance;

- inferences about schooling in Alaska drawn from national assessments in specific skill areas -- reading, math, and computer competence; and

- a consideration of population characteristics and expenditures devoted to public schools.

Together, these multiple sources of information provide us a means of estimating school performance in Alaska, despite the absence of formally adopted purposes or goals for the state.

The 1988 Report of Basic Skill Achievement Tests

Even though reading assessments were carried out by the Department of Education in all schools for a number of years, the data were summarized on a statewide basis and were not ever disclosed to the public on a district-by-district basis. Complying with the intent of the 1987 legislature, however, the department compiled standardized test results and other data from all districts, and prepared its report, Basic Skills Performance of Alaska Students: Achievement Test Results for 1984-85; 1985-86; and 1986-1987, and released it in February, 1988.[7]

The report said that composite scores of all students taking

[7]Memorandum No. 1, p. 64.

the test showed that, "On the average, [they] scored consistently higher than the national average." But what was also portrayed were appallingly low levels of achievement indicated for thousands of children and youth. In terms of percentages of district enrollments, though not in numbers, these undereducated students were in the rural areas of the state.

Before elaborating on the contents of the report, let us describe its contents, and what the tests were and who was tested.

The report is a 209-page document that has been widely praised for its responsible organization of data and professional presentation of related information. It is rich with both: for each of 55 school districts, it reports three years' of scores (with a few exceptions) on each of the areas tested; these are aggregated by four groupings of grade levels which are portrayed both as percentiles of average scores and (with a few exceptions) as percentages of students who scored above and below national averages. It also contains narrative profiles on each district, detailing enrollments, economic indicators, teaching staffs, and information about each district's testing program.

All seven of the different achievement tests administered by the districts which were the bases of the report were nationally standardized tests used to assess performance in reading (vocabulary), language arts (spelling, capitalization, punctuation usage), and mathematics (computation and concepts). Most of the tests also included reading comprehension and problem solving.

Based upon scores obtained on each test from a norming group,

a national average had been established, and on that basis, Alaska students were compared to the national average.

Over the three-year period covered by this report, the most complete data available were for grades 3, 6, and 8 in reading comprehension, language arts, and mathematics. More than 85 percent of the students in these grades were tested in these skill areas. At some grade levels, however, as few as 20 percent of the student population was tested.

Whatever their deficiencies, the standardized basic skills tests administered, according to the Department of Education, "are generally considered to be the fairest and most accurate measure of student performance in the areas of reading, mathematics, and languages that are currently available."

What generalizations can be made about the test results reported? As noted above, the percentiles of averaged scores of Alaska's students were about at the national average -- a reason for being not too uncomfortable about the performance of schooling. To generalize further we selected two test elements (reading comprehension and mathematics) and two grade level groupings (primary and upper secondary), and looked at school district scores.

Scores in nearly half of the districts (but enrolling far more than half of the students) could give Alaskans in those districts confidence in their schools. In such districts, substantially more than half of their high schoolers tested were above the national average in mathematics, and in one district, 72 percent were; at the primary level, one district reported 93 percent above the national level. Similar percentages were reported by

some districts in reading comprehension, as well as in other areas.

But scores in these basic skill areas in about half of the districts were substantially below the national average. In 23 districts, 60 to 84 percent of the high schoolers tested in mathematics were below the national average; the pattern at the primary level was similar. In those districts and four others, 60 to 89 percent of the high schoolers tested in reading comprehension were below the national average, and, again, the pattern at the primary level was similar.

Noting the variety of tests used and varying practices of districts, the Department of Education cautioned against comparisons among districts and said the most appropriate use to be made of the data would be to look at trends within districts. Commenting on this matter in the report, Education Commissioner William Demmert said:

> Some districts' scores were consistently high over time while others were consistently low. It appears that scores are lower when there is a high concentration of students whose families are poor and who live in homes where English is a second language.

Superintendents who responded to this committee's questionnaire about the achievement test scores provided additional perspectives about varying levels of performance in schools within their districts. Two superintendents said schools within their districts performed at a higher level when they had better teachers and better principals; another said partnerships between communities and schools produce more successful students;

others said there was a correlation between socio-economic levels of parents and their children's success; others said it was difficult to deliver a quality school program at the smallest schools; and others pointed to the non-English home language of learners as contributors to low performance.

Several superintendents submitted information which amplified the data in the report, showing that by tracking the scores of students they could demonstrate that real gains were being made in basic skills achievement in their school populations, even though such progress was not readily apparent in the summary report.

Only one superintendent dismissed the test results as having any meaning, but a number of them cautioned against assigning too much importance to the composite results in assessing school performance. Though these warnings were often from low-performing districts, and might be thought to be defensive, they were correct in pointing out that there had not been uniformity in determining what school populations were tested, and that in small districts, the movement in or out of even a small number of pupils could change composite scores.

In terms of their proportion to the school population in the Anchorage area, Native, Black, and Hispanic students appear to be the lowest achieving groups, but if data were aggregated by family income levels, a different category of low achievers might be identified. The Anchorage district told its board in 1987 that schools serving less affluent neighborhoods have lower scores and that its statistical analysis suggests that "socio-economic variables other than racial-ethnic group may be more

related to achievement than the ethnic background of students..."[8]

In its 1988 report, the Anchorage district, wanting to correct the impression that minorities were only low-achievers, pointed out that over 1,000 Natives, Blacks, and Hispanics scored above the national average and that by including Asians, the number rose to over 1,500.

In terms of numbers of students who score below national averages in reading comprehension and math tests, Caucasian students make up the largest racial group. Because lowest-quartile data by racial/ethnic group are not available across the state, the numbers of Caucasians who are among the lowest achievers is not known. The 1988 report by the Anchorage district, however, said 2,300 Caucasians were in that category.

College Entrance Examinations

Just as standardized basic skills achievement tests allow comparisons to be made among virtually all students across the nation, college entrance examinations administered nationally allow comparisons to be made among students planning to attend colleges.[9] The results of such tests are used by the U. S. Department of Education (USDOE) and the National School Boards Association (NSBA) and others as a means of reporting school performance annually among the states.

[8]Memorandum No. 16, p. 141

[9]Memorandum No. 4, p. 85, and No. 5, p. 88.

In 1987, the 2,094 Alaska graduating seniors who took the American College Test (ACT) earned scores that averaged 18.7, the same as the national average, but lower than the 19.4 average of the seven western states. This score, according to the USDOE, placed Alaska 19th of the 28 states in which the ACT was the dominant of the two national college entrance examinations.

(Since about 37 percent of Alaska's graduating seniors took the ACT, and 45 percent took the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT), the ACT was not the dominant test in the state, so the federal department should have ranked Alaska by the SAT.)

When the percentage of test takers is high, composite scores are expected to be lower. However, virtually all states with higher composite scores on the ACT had higher percentages of their seniors taking the test than did Alaska.

While these Alaska averages are unimpressive, 356 high-scoring Alaskans on the ACT (with scores of 26 or above) put Alaska in 5th place among the high scorers. Since averaged scores of Alaskans were only at the national average, however, the large number of high scorers suggests that there were many low-scorers among the Alaska college-bound students.

Although the averaged score of Alaska Natives (11.6) taking the ACT was only slightly more than half that of Caucasians, the difference may be attributable in part to the fact that they had not taken courses in some of the subjects of the test. The number of Natives completing the questionnaire was very small, so substantial meaning cannot be assigned, but, of those who did complete it, only a small percentage said they had studied chemistry, American history, and second year algebra. Natives

who reported taking these courses achieved scores resembling scores achieved by Caucasians.

In contrast to the low ranking given Alaska by USDOE on the basis of ACT scores, the federal department ranked Alaska 4th on the basis of scores on the second entrance examination, the SAT, in the 22 states in which it was the dominant exam. This test was taken by 2,584 Alaska graduating seniors in 1987.

The NSBA report of SAT scores in all 50 states, however, presents a somewhat different picture and illustrates the frailty of the foundation that such scores provide in ranking states. The NSBA report shows Alaska's average score of 479 on the math portion to be exceeded by 33 states, and 445 on the verbal portion, to be exceeded by 23 states. In most of these higher achieving states, however, the percentage of seniors taking the test was substantially lower than in Alaska.

In summary, like other measures of achievement, college entrance examinations tell us something about student and school performance, especially if the differences are large and similar percentages of seniors are tested, but like other measures, they have limitations and require interpretation. The results of these exams alone should not be seen as a sufficient basis for estimating the quality of schooling in a state.

Graduation Rates

Information about the percentages of Alaska students remaining in high school through graduation is not presently compiled by the Department of Education and there is little reliable data collected by districts, but the Governor's Commission on Children

and Youth estimated school dropouts in 1987 to be at least 25 percent.

An even higher dropout rate -- more than 30 percent -- was suggested by the USDOE. The federal department's report was based on a calculation of graduation rates. It reported that Alaska's graduation rate in 1987 was 68.3 (lower than the U. S. average of 71.5) and pointed to 35 states that are better at retaining students in school.[10]

Dropouts do not appear to be a serious problem in the smaller communities in the rural areas. In a 1984 study of small rural high schools,[11] University of Alaska Fairbanks researchers reported that the dropout rate had fallen to half the national average, and no rural educator or parent appearing at our hearings in 1988 cited dropouts as a concern. One rural scholarship applicant who was asked to write on the subject of dropout prevention said he was not able to do so because, where he lives, "school is the most exciting thing going on."

Some data collected by urban school districts and shared with this committee show the dropout problem to be serious, even if their data may be understating the problem. The Anchorage district reported in 1987 that the percentage of students dropping out by ethnic/racial groups to be from 13 to 16 percent, except for Alaska Natives, whose rate was 28 percent. In this district (which enrolls more than 40 percent of the students in the state), over 1,200 students (including 851 Caucasians)

[10]Memorandum No. 5, p. 88.

[11]Memorandum No. 11, p. 123.

dropped out in 1987.

Student Assessment

An important way to obtain useful information about schools is to ask those who have spent much of their young lives in them, but despite its usefulness as another means of assessing school performance, it is too rarely done.

ACT test-takers, however, complete wide-ranging questionnaires which include questions about their high schools[12]. In 1987, only 58 percent of the Alaska test-takers said they were satisfied with the quality of instruction in their high schools (about the same as the national percentage) and only 49 percent of those who were Natives said they were satisfied. Half of these college-bound Alaskans said they needed more help in educational/occupational planning, and nearly half said they needed more help in acquiring math and study skills. Nearly a third said they needed more help in reading and writing.

All seniors in Alaska are invited to respond to a survey conducted annually by the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education. In 1987, almost half of the 6,649 seniors responded.[13] About 15 percent rated their overall high school experience as "outstanding," about half as many as in recent years; almost 23 percent rated their experience as "poor," more than twice as many as recent years. Although they ranked "quality of instruction" positively, those surveyed made complaints similar to the

[12]Memorandum No. 4, p. 85.

[13]Memorandum No. 3, p. 83

college-bound ACT test-takers and in similar proportion: about half said they needed more help from the schools in mathematics and career planning; and more than a third said they needed more help in reading and writing. The higher the family incomes, the less often they said they needed assistance.

An informal assessment of a single aspect of schooling by a group of scholarship seekers in 1988 provides an additional view of high schools.[14] Most of these 29 seniors from twenty communities across the state who were asked to write essays on dropouts faulted their teachers and schools for not preventing dropouts more than they faulted their fellow students for leaving school.

These critics, whose well-written essays testified to the effectiveness of their own schooling, called upon teachers to help prevent dropouts by being caring, interesting, and encouraging, by offering words of kindness, rewarding even small successes, and by helping instill confidence and a sense of self-worth in all their students. One observed that these kinds of attitudes and actions are afforded to high-performing students, but rarely to low-performing ones.

Another essay writer observed, after being told by a potential dropout that "school is boring," said this was a difficult issue and the main reason students drop out. "The best answer we could provide," he wrote, was that "although school may be boring, it is something everyone must do."

Committee Hearings

[14]Memorandum No. 12, p. 128

At the seven hearings conducted by our committee we heard 207 persons. As might be expected at hearings on the subject of school performance, by far the larger number of parents, students, and organizational representatives who testified appeared before the committee not to praise their schools, but to fault them.

We do not know how widely their criticisms should be applied to schools generally -- some testimony related specifically to minorities, to rural schools, or to urban schools -- but their testimony provides an important perspective, and describes issues in schooling not disclosed by tests, questionnaires, or other formal instruments used for information gathering. A wide array of issues was brought to the committee's attention, and they are detailed in memoranda in the appendix.[15] What follows are themes that we heard repeatedly.

With regard to schooling practices generally, our committee was told:

- coursework is too rarely demanding or rigorous;

- students are moved ahead in grade without achieving mastery;

- Natives are graduated who are unprepared for college (citing a 60 percent dropout rate at the University of Alaska Fairbanks) or for jobs;

[15]Memoranda No. 20 p. 152; No. 23, p. 168; No. 31, p. 205; No. 36, p. 226a; No. 37. p. 228; No. 38, p. 232; No. 40 p. 238; and No. 41, p. 245.

- schools are rarely places kids enjoy being, and as a result, less learning occurs and absenteeism is high;

- too little is being done to address problems of at-risk students;

- neither students nor parents are told what is to be learned and why;

- kids learn at different rates, but that isn't taken into account in school programs;

- despite its effectiveness, peer tutoring is little used;

- private schools do better at producing achievement and at lower cost;

- village schools resemble schools their teachers attended much more than they reflect the culturally different lifeways of villages, even though they have the freedom to be different;

- too many Blacks and Natives are miscategorized as special education students, producing in them a sense of inferiority; and

- in too many classrooms, research evidence on effective schooling is ignored;

With regard to curriculum, persons appearing before the

committee said:

- Alaska history, incorporating Native culture and languages, is rarely offered in schools;

- speech and social skill building courses are seldom available;

- first language programs for Native language speakers are too few, often of inadequate quality, and of insufficient duration;

- parenting courses are not offered;

- specialized coursework (such as science and foreign languages) is not being delivered by broadcast or by satellite to small communities where it is needed even though $5 million is spent annually for television support; and

- too many textbooks are demeaning to minorities.

With regard to teachers and teaching, witnesses told the committee:

- villages get the worst teachers, but tenure keeps them from being dismissed;

- teachers' expectations are low for Native, Black, and Hispanic students;

- some teachers are ethnocentric and uncaring;

- teachers fail to build self-esteem in students;

- there is too much use of teaching strategies that don't work (such as lecturing and use of worksheets); and

- there are too few minority teachers.

A number of persons appearing before the committee pointed out that not all problems of student achievement arise from schooling practices. Some failures in schooling, they said, arise from social problems in communities, such as alcohol use or abusive families, and from student use of alcohol or drugs -- problem areas beyond the ability of schools to solve acting alone.

Finally, in the judgment of Education Commissioner William Demmert, the largest single issue, in terms of percentage of students who are left behind by the schools, is "associated directly with the Native community." In his extensive presentation to the committee, he pointed out that being poor results in children not being exposed to experiences that would lead to school success, and that being Native may mean that a child's language base may not be well established in either the home language or English. Their difficulties, he said, may be attributable to:

> ...the school's failure for not providing the proper learning environment and emphasis on culturally and developmentally appropriate environments with emphasis upon all phases of language development.

Superintendents' replies to our questionnaire

Some criticism of schools or practices came from superintendents themselves.[16] As noted earlier, some acknowledged that some teachers and administrators were not as good as others. Another said the whole rural system needs "drastic change," including improved opportunities for Native teacher aides to become teachers, and that there is "amazing research on growth, development, and learning that is not implemented in our schools."

What is also important here -- so that an opposite conclusion is not implied -- is that many school districts are taking steps to raise levels of student achievement and that some of them indicated in their letters a strong resolve to do so. Not surprisingly, a number also told of the need for stable and adequate funding (especially in single-site districts), additional technical assistance, and cash incentives to help them make progress.

Some of the changes made or being made include scheduling priority instruction (such as math or English) in morning sessions, increasing the time devoted to subjects in which achievement levels are low, avoiding or reducing interruptions to the school day, establishing remedial reading courses, calling upon teachers to hold high expectations of learners, engaging in "Battle of the Books" and other academic competitions, eliminating study halls to allow more coursework to be taken, participating in state-sponsored leadership academies, writing, and math projects, and employing postsecondary counselors.

[16]Memoranda No. 18, p. 147; and No. 33, p. 213.

Others have carried out more ambitious improvement plans. These include developing language programs for rural Natives (one of which was a computer-assisted program which won a national award), conducting summer school and summer vocational programs, using their best English-as-a-Second Language teachers as trainers of other teachers, and purchasing new computer labs and providing computers for home use of students.

Inferences from National Assessments

Another source of information about school performance in Alaska are those inferences that may be drawn from national surveys of student achievement and factors affecting it, even though the surveys did not include Alaska.

Studies conducted by the Educational Testing Service for the highly respected National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), are based upon questions asked of large, nationally representative samples of students in several regions of the nation. Three such studies reviewed by this committee were in the areas of reading, mathematics, and computer competence. They were carried out in 1986 and were subjects of reports published in 1988.

The NAEP report of reading achievement in America (covering grades 3, 7, and 11) concluded that reading proficiency increased by grade level, but that "students at all three grade levels have particular difficulty with tasks that require them to elaborate upon or defend their evaluations of what they have read."[17] When

[17]Memorandum No. 13, p. 132.

11th graders were asked to make comparisons between the content of a short passage ("Goods to Market") and their own experiences, 88 percent of them responded "at the minimal level or below."

Further, the gaps between poorer readers and better readers remained relatively constant between grades, as did the gaps between reading proficiencies of Caucasians and Blacks and Hispanics.

Although effectively helping students become critical readers, according to the researchers, means focussing on the comprehension process before, during, and after a reading experience, they reported that:

- a fourth of the third-graders said that their teachers never pointed out hard words before reading, and a third said their teachers never read new parts aloud;

- nearly 40 percent of the 7th and 11th graders said their teachers never provided questions to guide their reading for meaning; and

- though better readers are taught effective reading strategies, "poorer readers are likely to have their old, less-effective strategies reinforced."

The NAEP analysis of mathematics achievement, covering ages 9, 13, and 17, concluded that students had made gains since 1978, but the gains were in lower order skills.[18]

[18]Memorandum No. 22, p. 164.

Some specific findings on math achievement were:

- only one in five 9-year olds has mastered basic mathematical operations and beginning problem solving, though both are part of the elementary school curriculum;

- only half of the 17-year olds tested demonstrated the proficiency associated with junior high math, and the rest "appear to scarcely be able to perform the kinds of numerical operations that will likely be required of them in future life and work settings."

The authors also said that despite recommendations arising from research about effective instructional strategies, only a small percentage of students in the three age groups reported working at math in small groups, making reports, or working at laboratory activities. Instead, in most classrooms, teachers explain the work, using the chalkboard, and students work through problems in their texts or on worksheets.

The authors also said that math educators recommend the use of calculators, but few schools provide or use them, even though their use "can liberate students from time-consuming computations, freeing them to tackle more challenging tasks."

"Achieving a higher quality mathematics curriculum across the United States," the authors wrote," will require new materials, effective instructional methods, and improved means of evaluating student performance."

The NAEP report on computer competence,[19] a large-scale project involving representative 3rd, 7th, and 11th graders, concluded that:

> Most American youngsters have some familiarity with computers. Most, for example, can identify a keyboard, disk drive, and printer. Most have some practical knowledge of computers... But, with the exception of word processing, only a small fraction were able to answer questions about the most important computer applications or about programming.

Since computer study has been called a fourth basic skill area -- i.e. useful across curriculum domains -- the authors sought to find out the extent to which computers were used in other subject areas. Their conclusion: "Not enough to fully tap the computer's potential for enhancing learning in traditional subjects."

Although frequency of usage of computers is low for most learners for most purposes, enthusiasm is high. When students in grades 3 and 7 were asked if they liked using computers, 86 percent responded affirmatively.

Population Characteristics and Expenditures

Two other sets of factors relating to school performance are typically employed in making state-by-state comparisons by the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) and the National School Boards Association (NSBA): population characteristics and

[19]Memorandum No. 24, p. 171.

expenditures.

The USDOE, in its 1987 wall chart placed Alaska 4th among the states in per capita income (reporting it to be $17,796) and 38th in school age poverty (reporting it to be 11.4 percent).[20] The federal agency said 13 states had a higher percentage of minorities in its population than Alaska's 34 percent, and 18 states had a higher percentage of handicapped learners. Although the NSBA did not rank states, its data were similar.

The second set of factors, involving public expenditures, is labelled "resource inputs" by the USDOE. Its wall chart showed Alaska as 1st in the nation in teacher salaries (with an average of $43,970), expenditures per pupil ($8,253), and expenditures as a percent of income per capita (46.4 percent), but 50th in expenditures for teacher salaries as a percent of total expenditures.

The chart ranked Alaska 22nd in the nation in pupil-teacher ratio, which in Alaska was 16.7 and in the nation, 17.8; and Alaska as 43rd in the nation in pupil-staff ratio.

The NSBA's "vital signs" summary showed the same pupil-teacher ratio as the USDOE, but reported a lower average teacher's salary ($40,424) and a lower per capita expenditure ($7,038).

The Alaska Department of Education reported slightly different numbers in its 1988 report: the average teacher salary in the state was $39,070 in 1987-88, the cost per pupil was $6,076 in city and borough districts and $11,159 in rural educational

[20]Memorandum No. 5, p. 88.

attendance areas (1987), and the pupil-teacher ratio was 15.67 (1986-87).

Although we cannot explain the variations in the figures reported, even the lower figures show public spending on a per-pupil basis and average teacher salaries in Alaska to be the highest in the nation.

Chapter IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

What picture may be fairly drawn about school performance from the information we have gathered?

With regard to the outcomes of schooling, we have concluded:

1. Even though achievement tests and college entrance examinations are acknowledged to be imperfect measures of student and school performance, they are useful indicators in the areas tested.

2. Together with other indicators, the tests tell us we have much to be proud of, but also that there are serious problems of student underachievement.

3. In the largest borough school districts and some city districts, substantially more than half of the students tested show results above the national average in reading and math skills, but in 27 smaller districts, substantially more than half show test results below the national average.

4. Several thousands of children and youth across grade levels are seriously deficient in knowing the basic skills of reading and mathematics.

5. Though the data are incomplete and imprecise, it

appears that as many as one-fourth of the seniors who conclude their schooling -- sometimes as graduates and sometimes as dropouts -- are likely to be unprepared to succeed in jobs or in further education or training.

6. The dropout rate in Alaska is high, especially in the urban areas, and though some districts are inventively addressing the issue, others are not.

7. Even though the larger number of undereducated students are Caucasians, a disproportionately large number are Natives and other minorities.

8. Virtually all of the districts with the lowest level of indicated achievement are in areas where incomes are low and language skills are not well developed.

9. The percentage of college bound students who are high scorers on the ACT entrance examination is higher than in most states, but the composite score of Alaska ACT test-takers is average. The composite score of Alaska SAT test-takers is, on the other hand, above the national average.

10. Some conditions which make the tasks of teaching more difficult -- such as problems in families and communities -- cannot be remedied by the school acting alone, but will require cooperative actions by communities and other agencies.

With regard to the process and content of schooling, we have concluded:

1. Despite widely accepted research findings, ineffective teaching practices and strategies still characterize many classrooms.

2. State laws and regulations permit wide variation in how and when schooling is to be conducted, but even in culturally different settings, the uniformity of patterns suggests an acceptance of traditional models that are only partially successful.

3. There are wide variations among districts in the amount of time devoted to specific studies, and the small amount of time devoted by some districts to language arts, for instance, is probably too little.

4. Though large numbers of good and excellent teachers are helping most children learn, others described as poor teachers continue to be employed.

5. Elements critical to meeting the ic needs of cultural and ethnic minorities in learnin uch as first language instruction, English-as-a-second language, relevant curriculum, social skills) are often missing or are of low priority.

6. Too many teachers have low expectations of learners, and as a result, coursework is less demanding, teaching strategies are less effective, and less learning takes place.

7. Even though employment of minority teachers can help provide role models for minorities and reduce racial

prejudice in others, the percentage of minority teachers remains very low in comparison with the state's minority population.

8. The state spends more than $5 million annually for public and commercial television (and another $4 million for public radio), but very little time is allotted to meeting instructional needs of schools.

With regard to school leadership and governance, we have concluded:

1. Some rural communities have too little information about the schools that enroll their children and too little influence upon their schools, either in program or staffing.

2. Local advisory board members are often insufficiently educated by their school district boards to carry out their roles responsibly.

3. The content of replies of superintendents to this committee's questionnaire suggests that there are varying levels of concern among them over student achievement and in their determination to improve it.

With regard to accountability and school improvement generally, we have concluded:

1. Current planning by the Department of Education for the uniform administration of a basic skills achievement test and disclosure of results will encourage schools to give

priority attention to the basic skills of reading, arithmetic, and elements of composition.

2. So that other public expectations of what schools are for (such as teaching other kinds of knowledge and skills, providing a nurturing environment, and building a sense of self esteem in students by holding high expectations) are not neglected, accountability of a broader kind is also required.

3. Shared public expectations of what schools are for on a statewide basis should be made explicit through a public process of adopting a purpose and goals of schooling, and these should become known to learners and parents as well as educators.

4. Because many problems or needs vary among schools and districts, state policy should encourage local priority identification and planning for remedial action rather than mandate programs that may be applicable to only some schools and districts, and not others.

5. Some limitations of small schools in rural areas can be partially met through use of technology and provision of technical assistance, but students will probably need some experience in larger communities if they are to succeed in jobs or colleges in those larger communities.

6. There are additional issues affecting school performance that time did not allow us to address.

In summary, this committee has concluded that Alaska can take

pride in the accomplishments of its schools, but as it does, it must take steps to address deficiencies of performance where they exist to help assure that all students master basic skills and benefit more fully from schooling.

Specifically, we have concluded that achieving the goal of helping all children learn requires, as a start, that the legislature declare what the purpose of schooling is and obtain broad accountability from schools, encourage schools and those they serve to devise and carry out changes they identify as needed, and enable the Department of Education to provide expanded leadership and support to school improvement.

Further, we have concluded that the legislature should establish a joint committee to continue the work begun by this Senate committee.

Pursuing the strategy we propose will require only a marginal increase in state spending -- less than one half of one percent of current operating expenditures for education.

Our recommendations to the legislature follow.

Declaring what the purpose of schooling is and obtaining broad accountability.

1. That the legislature adopt a purpose of schooling in Alaska that summarizes goals of schooling, that expresses our highest and noblest aspirations for the whole universe of learners, and that conveys a sense of resolution that the stated intentions will be realized.

Further, that the legislature require the State Board of Education to adopt goals of schooling for Alaska consistent with the legislatively stated purpose.

a. If there is unanimity on any point among educators, it is that purposes and goals of schooling should be explicit and known. Together they declare what schools are for, and shared with parents and students, they can integrate the school experience by providing a context into which all of the right things happening in a school fit.

b. While a goal statement is typically lengthy and specific in describing outcomes (a sample is in Memorandum 9), a purpose statement is broadly descriptive and typically brief enough to be remembered by all of those who are engaged in schooling (including students).

c. We recommend that the following statement of purpose become the legislature's proposal:

"The purpose of schooling in Alaska is to help assure that all learners will:

- succeed now and in their next level of education or work;
- shape worthwhile and satisfying lives for themselves;
- exemplify the best values of society; and
- be effective in influencing the character and

quality of the world about them."

Educator John Goodlad, who reviewed 300 years of goals in America's schools, said they fall under four categories: academic, vocational, social and civic, and personal. All four are encompassed by the foregoing purpose.[21]

2. That the legislature appropriate funding required by the Department of Education to conduct its planned assessment of student achievement in grades 4, 6, and 8 across the state, to plan for the assessment of achievement among high schoolers and to carry out a survey of high school graduates.

a. It was the action of the legislature in 1987 that led to the first-ever compilation and public disclosure of the results of district-administered tests in early 1988, but the variety of tests used limits the application of such results in shaping of public policy. A uniform test series uniformly administered is required, and the Department is proceeding to take that action.[22]

b. The Department is undertaking to identify better measures of achievement than standardized tests for use at the high school level and planning to carry out a survey of graduates to identify strengths and weaknesses of their schooling and to learn of their post high school success.

---

[21]Memorandum No. 9. p. 100.

[22]Memorandum No. 25, p. 174.

c. The cost of conducting the assessment over grades 4 to 8 is estimated to be $110,000, and the cost of the graduate survey to be $10,000.

3. That the legislature require each school district to file each year a brief improvement plan/report of progress with the Commissioner of Education for transmittal to the legislature before the budget for education is adopted.

a. The purpose of this requirement would be to compel each district to identify what it considers to be its priority concerns for the coming year and the actions it plans to take to address them (a task many districts carry out already), and to inform a larger audience of its intentions. Each succeeding report would tell to what extent the district had achieved its goals.

b. This report, together with the statewide assessment and the report card recommended below, will increase the accountability of districts to the public at the same time it encourages planning for improvement.

c. Although this might be complained as burdensome by districts, it is far less than is required of agencies of government seeking lower levels of funding than some districts.

d. The Department of Education would prescribe the format for this two or three page report. No penalty would attach to the districts not complying, but for the resultant ignominy they would experience.

4. That the legislature require each school to prepare a report card on itself for the community or neighborhood it serves describing in plain words how well it has performed over the preceding school year.

a. The people served by a school deserve to know such things as how its students' achievement compares with others of the same grades in the region, the state, and the nation, and how much gain they have made over the preceding year, how students, parents, and teachers rate the school, what honors have been won by how many students, and what steps the school has taken to make itself a better place for learning. Having such information reminds the parents that the school is theirs and prepares them to influence the school program.[23]

b. Present reports of superintendents to their boards vary widely in their quality, clarity, and completeness. Some of those that are incomplete, for instance, tell of acceptable levels in composite test results, but do not point out that grade level composite results are falling; or "growth scale values" are noted, but no comparison is made with national norms. Other reports employ technical language -- "normal curve equivalents" or "regression analysis" -- that tell little to most parents. One report to a school board declined to comment on the quality of the district's performance, despite the fact that students tested were far below national norms, on the ground that no base testing had taken place.

[23]Memorandum No. 34, p. 216.

c. As part of its School Reform Act of 1985, Illinois began requiring report cards of all of its schools and the action was applauded by the news media of the state and educators around the nation as one of the most important steps that could be taken to improve accountability and schooling.

d. The specific form and content of this report card would be prescribed by the Department of Education by regulation.

Encouraging school/community-based school improvement.

1. That the legislature establish a competitive grant program to encourage schools, in partnerships with the communities they serve, to plan and carry out changes that will help them become more effective places of learning for all.

a. Our proposal is made in recognition of the fact that priority issues vary from school to school and actions required also vary, and, further, in our acceptance of the research findings that lasting changes are more likely to be realized when those affected by changes participate in devising them.

b. Actions required to improve school performance urged upon this committee were widely differing and they suggest the kinds of things that schools might consider in their proposals for funding: inventing policies to engage parents in schooling, establishing links with social

service agencies, restructuring language arts programs in the early grades, funding computer-assisted instruction, genuinely empowering minorities, assuring quality preschools, inaugurating a program of apprenticeship training for village teachers, rewriting curriculum guides to inform parents how they could assist their children, devising programs to address at-risk students, having students participate in teacher evaluation and so on. A fuller description of proposals made by Alaskans are contained in the summaries of superintendent recommendations and of the hearings conducted which are in the appendix.[24]

c. Our proposal is modeled upon Washington State's "Schools of the 21st Century" program, enacted last year.[25] Our summary of the program and abstracts of a few proposals made there testify to the ability and spirit that local leadership can bring to the issue of school reform. This year, the Washington legislature will be considering proposals to expand the program there.

d. Grants not to exceed $50,000 annually for three years should be awarded by the State Board of Education to at least 20 schools. Criteria for awards would be established by the Board consistent with the legislation, but awards would probably be made to schools whose proposals (prepared by faculties, parents, and students)

[24] Memoranda No. 20 p. 152; No. 23, p. 168; No. 31, p. 205; No. 36, p. 226a; No. 37. p. 228; No. 38, p. 232; No. 40 p. 238; and No. 41, p. 245.

[25] Memorandum No. 35, p. 219.

reflect analytical consideration of priority issues and a re-thinking of the schooling enterprise toward long-term and cost-effective change that promises improved performance, rather than to schools which want to simply add a person or activity to what presently exists. If agreed to locally, waivers of state law and regulation could be granted by the Commissioner of Education under the proposed legislation.

e. The effectiveness of community-school partnerships and other elements of this proposal were suggested in a study of small rural high schools by University of Alaska Fairbanks educational researchers as well as by numerous national studies.[26]

2. That the legislature include in the same legislation provision for grants to each University of Alaska campus to enable each of them to support school based changes through technical assistance and research activities consistent with the purpose of the legislation.

a. Grants should not exceed $75,000 annually, should be for three years, and should be administered through the Department of Education to assure coordination with all activities of school improvement being fostered by the department.

b. This funding would support the collaborative relationship the Commissioner of Education has urged as necessary to making progress. Grants would likely be made

[26]Memorandum No. 11. p. 123.

for to the departments of education (perhaps in cooperation with other departments) at each campus for action-research, and to rural colleges for new cooperative arrangements between themselves and local schools.

c. Examples of the kinds of important roles the University could effectively perform in bringing about school change are proposals from the Juneau, Fairbanks, and Anchorage campuses to engage in action programs to effect school changes which are in the appendix.[27]

d. We propose an appropriation of $350,00 for this purpose.

3. That the legislature modify A.S. 14.08.115, which permits establishment of advisory school boards in rural educational attendance areas, to require their establishment, that they be consulted on their local school programs and faculty appointments, and that regional school boards provide them with information they need to responsibly perform their roles.

a. Witnesses at our hearings repeatedly called for local control of their schools, citing unresponsiveness of their regional boards, but to lodge full responsibility in very small communities would be only to increase administrative costs, which already are high.

b. Some regional educational attendance area boards have already granted a broad consultative power and

[27]Memorandum No. 42 p. 245

responsibility to advisory boards in their regions.

c. If small communities can obtain the authority to effectively exert influence over their own schools, it could allow consolidation of some small districts to be considered (or at least the consolidation of their administrative functions).

Enhancing the ability of the Department of Education to foster school improvement.

1. That the legislature authorize funding for two partially exempt positions within the Department of Education to give leadership to school improvement.

a. The first of these proposed positions is that of school improvement coordinator -- a person who would carry out all functions in support of the competitive grant program for schools and colleges, the annual reports prepared by districts, and the school report cards, and assist the State Board of Education, if so assigned, in pursuing its goals and initiatives.

b. The second -- and equally important -- position is that of special assistant for minority affairs -- a person who would encourage policies and activities upon the department and upon others that would help reduce the persisting gap between indicated levels of performance among minorities and other Alaskans. A key task would be collecting information on existing culturally relevant materials, preparing a critical guide and disseminating it to schools, and identifying further needs.

c. The cost of the two positions, including benefits, is estimated at $140,000.

2. That the legislature authorize funding to allow the Department of Education to contract with experts in specified instructional areas to give leadership to improving instruction in those areas.

a. This funding would enable the department to provide technical assistance in areas identified by districts and itself as high in priority, such as early childhood education, parenting, or at-risk students, and to have the flexibility afforded by contractual arrangements.

b. Specifically, this approach would allow the department to obtain the services of outstanding persons presently in school districts or universities, who could take leave from those positions, but who would be unavailable if the appointments were permanent. It would also allow the kind of expertise made available by the department to change as priority needs change.

c. These experts would supplement the work of the department's present education specialists, who are obliged to be not only specialists, but generalists as well. They have multiple curriculum assignments and work at all grade levels.

d. Providing this expertise would be responsive to repeated pleas by superintendents of small districts.

e. We propose funding of $140,000 for this purpose.

3. That the legislature transfer the Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission and RATNet to the Department of Education from the Department of Administration, and that their purposes be clarified to include instruction.

a. These transfers are proposed to increase the opportunity of school districts and the Department of Education to employ communications technology for such purposes as broadcasting programs to be viewed by students and parents together (such as drugs, alcohol), delivering programs to students during and after school that cannot otherwise be offered in small communities (such as foreign languages or physics) or enriching existing instruction (such as science developments or current affairs), delivering programs on parenting to parents, and employing interactive capacities in a variety of ways.

b. Except for the Anchorage station, very little or no instructional programming is carried on public television stations, though much of their programming is educational in the broad sense. There is virtually no instructional programming on the RATNet channel during days or evenings, even though the legislative intent in FY 1987 was that "RATNet and Learn/Alaska be combined on one statewide network managed by the Department of Administration."[28]

c. This proposal envisions only some <u>expansion</u> of the

[28]Memorandum No. 32, p. 208.

instructional use of this technology, not a transformation of their current functions.

d. Acceptance of this proposal would restore to the Department of Education expertise in educational technology applications lost to it by the closure of the Learn/Alaska network.

e. The transfer legislation should provide a statutory basis for RATNet as an entity, its membership and terms, and provide the foundation for adoption of its policies pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act.

f. Assuring that some hours each day are available on RATNet for instructional purposes is especially important to the smallest rural communities.

4. That the legislature authorize the Department of Education to provide for alternative certification.

a. Current law requires that persons hold baccalaureate degrees to be issued certificates as classroom teachers, but two groups of persons -- vocational education teachers and recognized experts in Native languages and culture -- are in full charge of classrooms without meeting that requirement. Both have met the test of competency, but only the vocational teachers have been issued certificates.

b. The committee heard educators experienced in rural Alaska urge alternative certification approaches to increase the number of Natives who are teaching in rural

schools to produce a greater cultural congruence between teachers and learners.

c. The U. S. Office of Education strongly urges alternative approaches to certification for qualified professionals who lack the traditional education coursework typically required by states, and reports that research bears out the capabilities of alternate route teachers.

d. If the legislature cannot agree with providing broad authorization to the Department of Education to allow alternate routes to certification, it should, at a minimum, authorize issuance of certificates on the basis of competence to recognized experts on Native language and culture.

5. That the Department of Education give priority to an analysis of the possible use of Mt. Edgecumbe during the summer months for programs for rural students.

a. The analysis should include a consideration of whether, for instance, the greatest need is to motivate learners for secondary studies back in their home communities or to be remedial and enrichment programs for those going to college.[29]

6. That the Department of Education seek additional ways to broaden the knowledge of the education community about the principles of effective schooling, effective teaching

[29]Memorandum No. 28, p. 186.

strategies, and other research-based practices.

Continuing the Legislature's engagement with issues of school improvement.

1. That the legislature establish a joint committee to continue the work of the Senate Committee on School Performance.

a. Most legislatures undertaking school reform spend two to three years in the effort.The absence of recommendations on a number of issues relating to the quality of schooling does not signify an unconcern over them, but only admits our inability to gather sufficient information in the short lifetime of our committee to allow us to frame recommendations which we could confidently urge upon our colleagues. It is the complexity of these issues that underlies the recommendation that the work we have begun continue through the 16th session.

b. Here are brief descriptions of some of the policy issues that need further examination:

Teacher certification. The State Board and Department of Education are presently reviewing teacher preparation and certification requirements contained in regulations and considering what changes ought to be made. If, is as often true with review of regulations, the active participants are chiefly those who have a stake in the regulations as they are, the public might not be well served. In the efforts of other states to improve schooling, changes to traditional requirements often look to recognition of

outstanding teaching and administrative talent and to competency requirements for certificate renewal. Numerous superintendents in Alaska have faulted teacher preparation as it now exists.

Administrator certification. Given the research findings of the key role that a principal can play in the quality of a school, at least one state has begun requiring competence in establishing effective parent-school relationships, a high quality school climate, and instructional leadership in order to have an administrator's certificate renewed.

Tenure. The Association of Alaska School Boards has called for a 5-year period before the protections of the tenure law would be extended to new teachers, an increase from the current 2-year rule. Comments of superintendents ranged from support for that proposition, saying that "many average teachers...tend to become stagnant and weak quickly after becoming tenured," to a more extreme view: "Abolish tenure!" Teacher representatives do not see tenure protection as the problem, but say it is the failure of districts to establish and carry out sound teacher evaluation programs.

Evaluation. Testimony we heard suggested that the issue of teacher and administrator evaluation should be reviewed. Some administrators do use evaluations as the basis for counseling poor teachers to choose other occupations, but there are reports that some local teacher organizations exert pressures upon principals and superintendents to avoid unfavorable evaluations of members. One witness

called for external review by peers of superintendents' performance to assist boards in reaching decisions about renewal of contracts. Other states and districts require student participation in evaluation, and researchers support both that approach and peer review. Both are permitted in Alaska by regulation, but neither is required.

Categorical programs. Two kinds of problems were called to the committee's attention. The first was a concern of parents whose children are placed in "special education" on the basis of perceived deficits in linguistic or social skills when the parents believed they should not be. The second concern (this one voiced by superintendents) was over the disruption caused by "pull-out" programs for special categories of children. These are usually programs that are federally funded and regulated, but a review and inquiries to other jurisdictions might produce prospective remedies.

Collective bargaining. Three superintendents recommended statewide negotiations with teacher organizations as a means of removing from the local arena what is often an adversarial contest. One said it was the "number one thing the legislature could do to improve student performance." Rural spokesmen said the tensions arising through the whole process of negotiations stand in the way of bringing about the community-school partnership that is needed. Some jurisdictions in other states have discovered means of conducting collective bargaining but avoiding the kinds of results that occasionally are reported. We think it is a complicated issue, but with more information and additional perspectives to those we now have, the proposal could be

evaluated.

Administrative consolidation. Districts with very small enrollments have told the committee of the burden imposed upon them by Department of Education for reports because their funding level is too low to employ sufficient staff. (One superintendent declined to answer our questionnaire because he had no staff.) Others described their need for technical assistance which large districts can provide for themselves. As noted earlier, increasing the importance of school advisory panels in rural communities might allow the consolidation of administrative functions without reducing local control.

Other. A few illustrations: Since as many rural students are turned away from Mt. Edgecumbe as are admitted, is there a need for another boarding school? Does the large number of computers in schools represent unrealized promise? Can the energies of social service agencies and schools be linked in new ways that help schools and students in their tasks? Should tuition vouchers be offered to students to allow greater choice in schools? What are the issues that would have to be considered if the state were to require that all schools be accredited? Can correspondence coursework become the basis of mastery learning in classrooms? Can the Teacher Scholarship Loan Program be modified to increase the number of Native teachers in rural areas?

c. The committee would also review the latest achievement test data and surveys, and monitor

school improvements inaugurated.

d. Even though some superintendents did not welcome legislative interest in this area (in fact, one declined to reply to our questionnaire), one urged continuation of the committee and several applauded the committee for its broad concern with the quality of schooling. The Alaska Federation of Natives has urged its continuation.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Adoption of this committee's recommendations would add $1.8 million to education spending in Fiscal Year 1990. This increment would be equivalent over the year to about $18 per student enrolled, or about ten cents per day per student.

Summarized, our recommendations are:

A. Declaring what the purpose of schooling is and obtaining broad accountability.

- by adopting a statement of purpose of schooling;
- by appropriating funds for student assessment ($120.0);
- by requiring each district to file an annual improvement plan based on its priorities; and
- by requiring each school to issue a report card on itself to the community it serves.

B. Encouraging school/community based improvement

- by making competitive grants to 20 schools (not more than $50,000 each) to make schools better; partnerships with communities required; together, re-thinking schooling to

improve performance and to do so cost-effectively ($1,000.0);

- by making competitive grants to colleges and universities to complement school-based change ($300.0); and

- by requiring advisory boards and specifying powers for them in rural educational attendance areas.

C. Enhancing the ability of the Department of Education to foster school improvement

- by establishing positions of school improvement coordinator, minority affairs policy assistant ($140.0);

- by providing funding for contracting with experts to give leadership in priority areas ($140.0);

- by transferring state-supported broadcasting functions to the Department of Education;

- by authorizing the department to provide for alternative certification of teachers; and

- by urging the department to analyze possible summer use of Mt. Edgecumbe; to further disseminate information on effective schooling to the education community.

D. By establishing a joint committee to continue work of the Special Senate Committee ($100.0)

Extracts from Basic Skills Performance of Alaska's Students, Achievement Test Results for 1984-85; 1985-86; and 1986-1987. Alaska Department of Education, February, 1988, 209 pages.

1. This report is a first step in addressing the question of how well Alaska's students are achieving. [Test results were collected and] these results were combined with information describing the nature of students enrolled in each district, the nature of the school and the classroom environment...

2. [T]his is the first time that such a diverse set of information which describes education at the district level has been compiled and disseminated.

3. Standardized basic skills tests are generally considered to be the fairest and most accurate measure of student performance in the areas of reading, mathematics and language arts that are currently available.

4. Because of the wide mix of tests in use, it is not appropriate to compare one district's scores with those of another district...[or]...with the statewide average...

5. [The state averages are not based on the performance of all Alaskan students because] not all districts test all grades and not all tests include every subject area.

6. On the average, Alaskan students for whom there were test results [over the three year period] scored consistently higher than the national average in almost every area. [However,] in some districts test scores are consistently high, others are consistently low, and still others have fluctuated.

7. It appears that scores are lower when there is a high concentration of students whose families are poor and who live in homes where English is a second language.

---------- Comments ----------

a. So that "composite scores" are not mistaken for "students," I think I would recast the generalized statement in number 6 above to say that "the percentiles of average scores of Alaska students...were consistently higher than the national average in almost every area." In some districts large majorities are below the national average; in other districts, large numbers are.

b. It was a challenge for me to try to generalize about 196 pages of data this report contains, but (at risk), I have selected four districts that I think typify the range of high and low achievement scores in Alaska's schools.

Enclosed are two figures (A and B) about two districts in which more than half of the students taking the test exceeded national averages. They are intended only to illustrate the ranges of achievement levels found in somewhat more than half of Alaska's school districts. These districts enroll more than 80 percent of the students in the state.

Also enclosed are two figures (C and D) about two districts in which far more than half of the students fell well below national averages. They are intended only to illustrate the ranges of achievement levels in somewhat less than half of the districts of the state. As you will note, large majorities of those taking the tests in such districts fell below national averages.

c. Additional information about how well or how poorly districts are performing (as measured by standardized tests) is obtained when districts array their data by quartile. Forty districts did so in the area of reading comprehension.

- Even in the high achieving districts, many students are failing to learn basic skills. In 17 districts with well more than 25 percent of their students in the top quartile, an average of 13 percent were in the lowest.

- In low achieving districts, the numbers in the lowest quartile are much greater than in high achieving districts, but there are small numbers of high achieving students. In 17 districts having well more than 25 percent of their students in the lowest quartile, there was an average of 10 percent in the top.

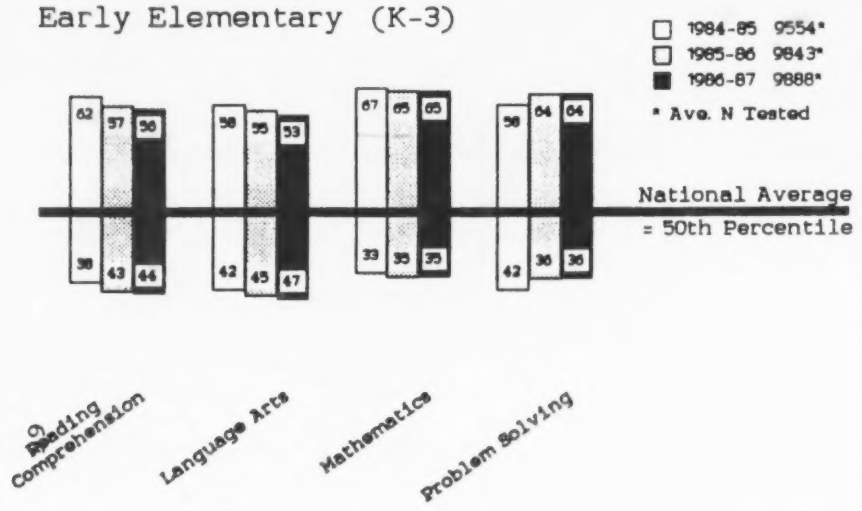
d. To provide a fuller knowledge of what standardized achievement tests are like I am enclosing sample questions from two levels of tests produced by SRA. This is a test widely used in rural areas.

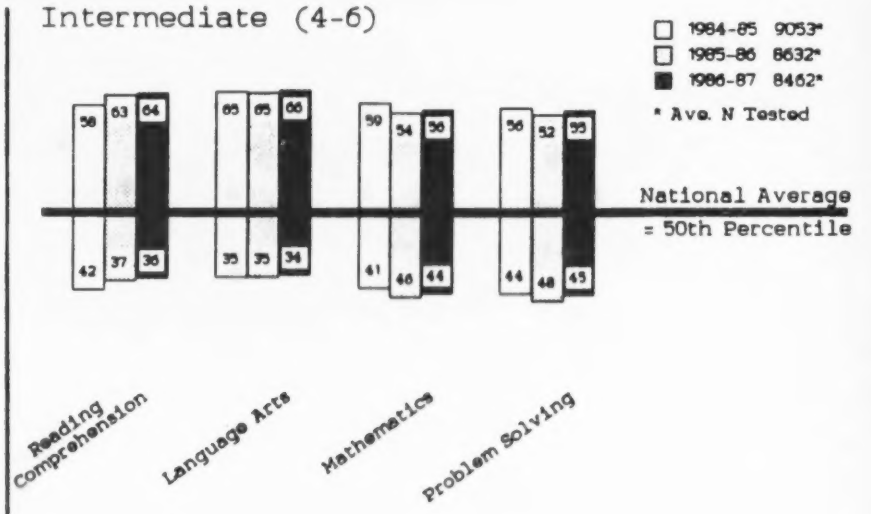
e. The Department of Education's report was the subject of a commentary by Dr. Judy Kleinfeld of the University of Alaska. A copy of that commentary is also enclosed.

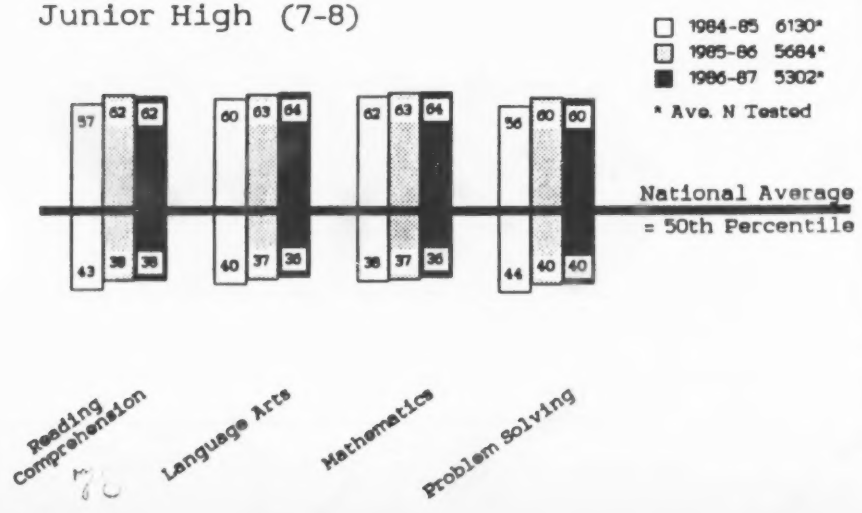
Bob Arnold 6/21/88

FIGURE TWO

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT
PERCENTAGES OF STUDENTS SCORING ABOVE AND BELOW THE NATIONAL 50th PERCENTILE







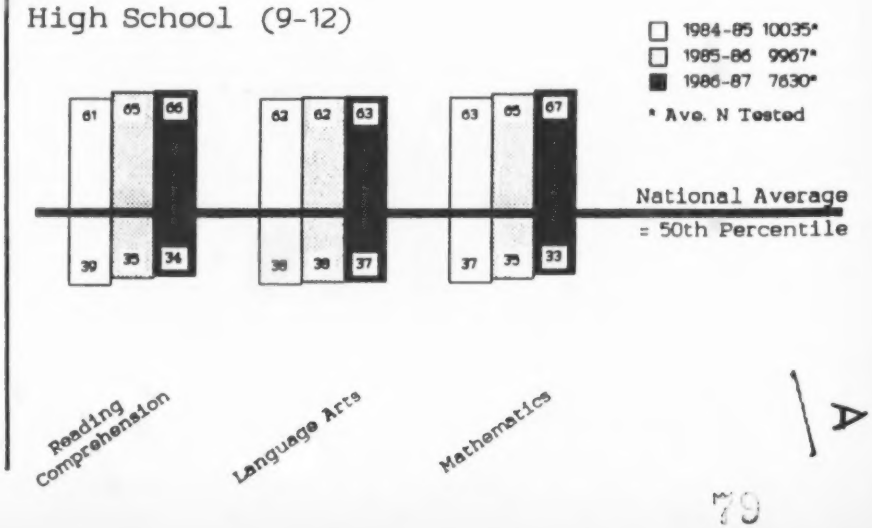
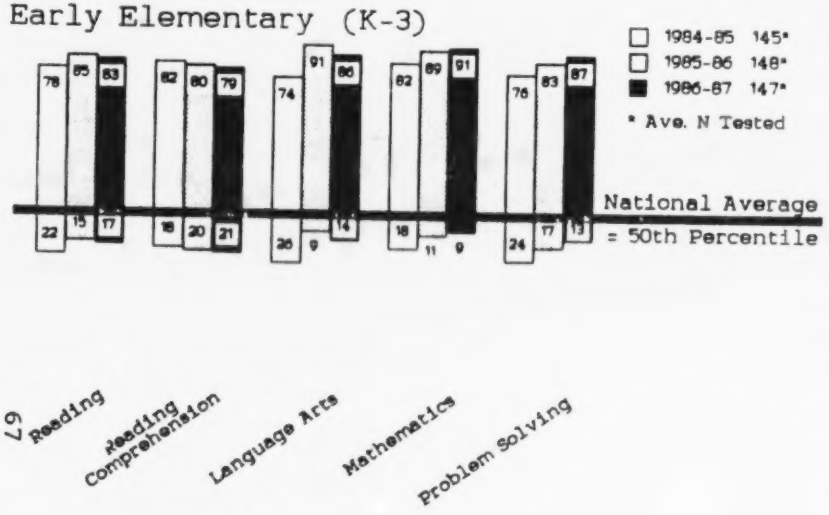
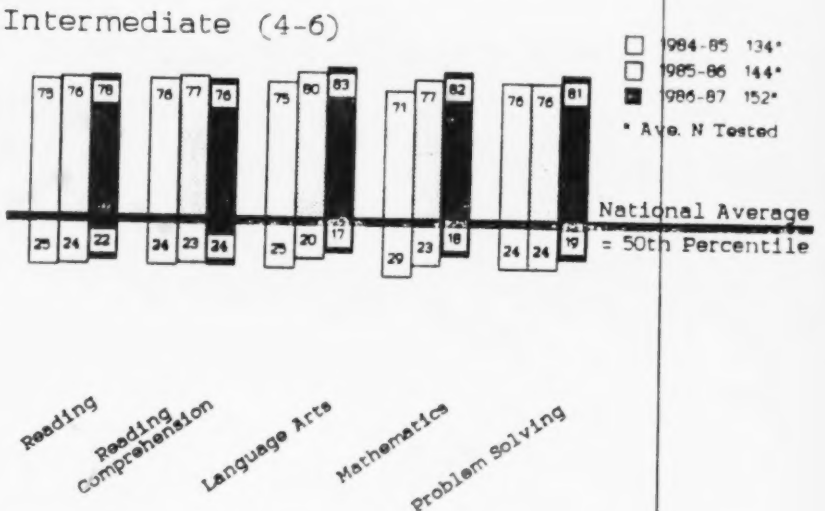


FIGURE TWO
PETERSBURG CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
PERCENTAGES OF STUDENTS SCORING ABOVE AND BELOW THE NATIONAL 50th PERCENTILE

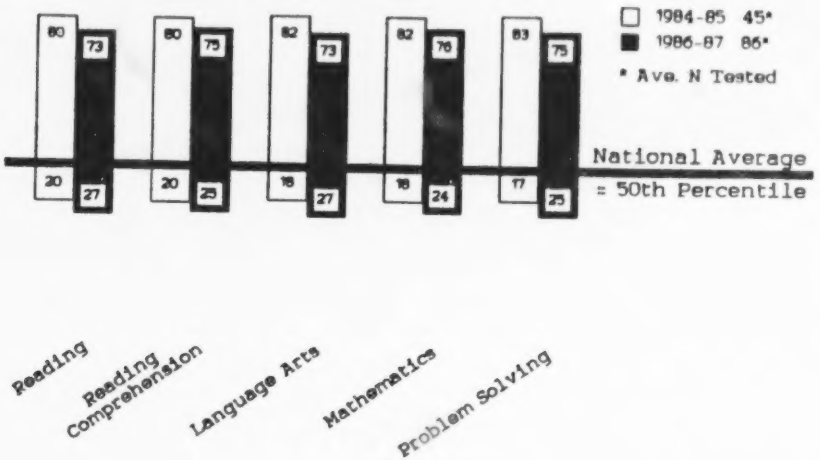
Early Elementary (K-3)



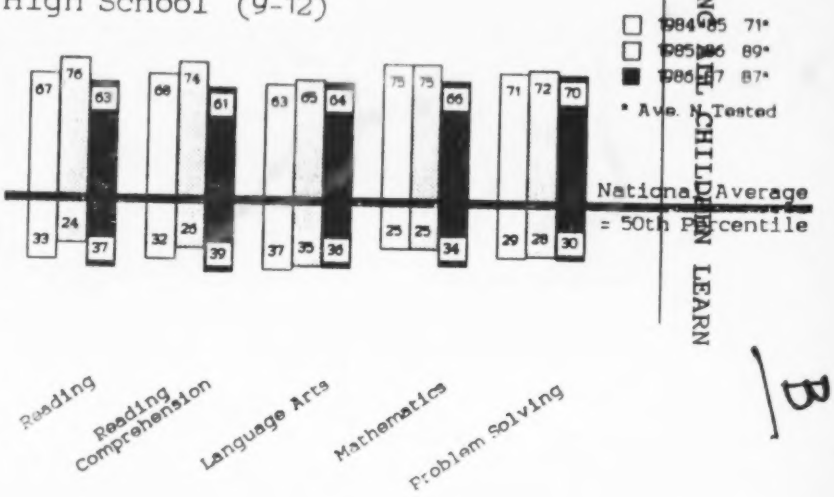
Intermediate (4-6)



Junior High (7-8)



High School (9-12)



HELPING ALL CHILDREN LEARN

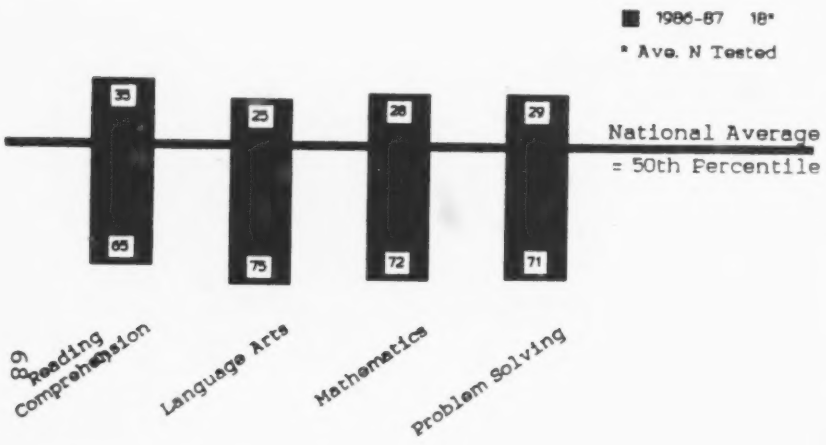
B

FIGURE TWO

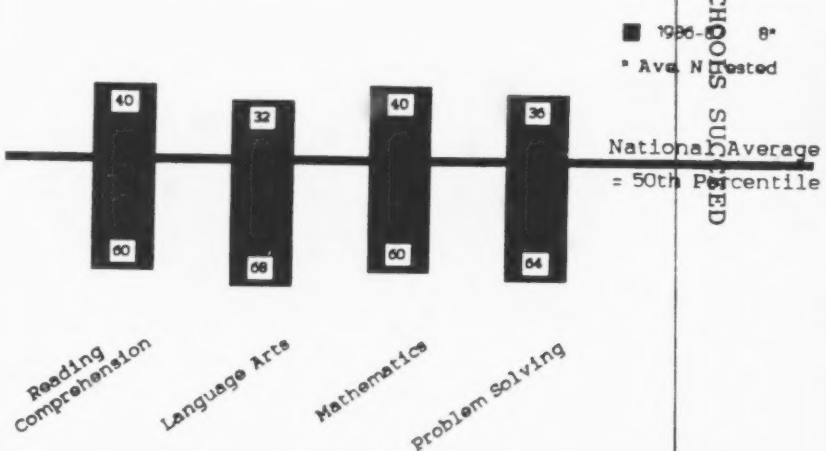
DISTRICT

PERCENTAGES OF STUDENTS SCORING ABOVE AND BELOW THE NATIONAL 50th PERCENTILE

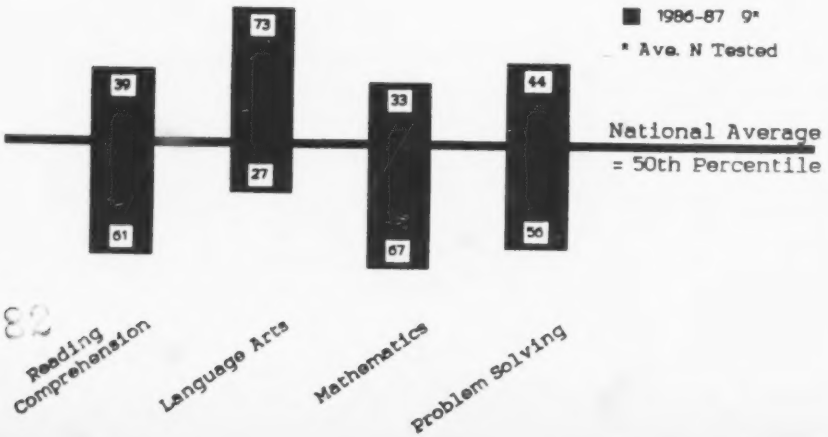
Early Elementary (K-3)



Intermediate (4-6)



Junior High (7-8)



High School (9-12)

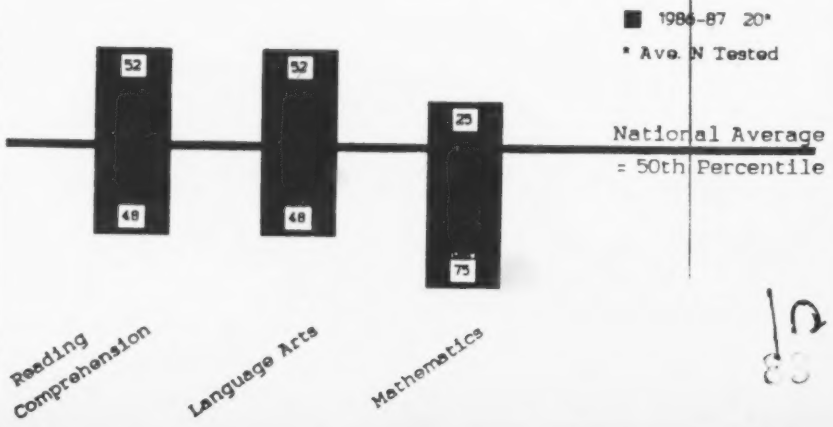
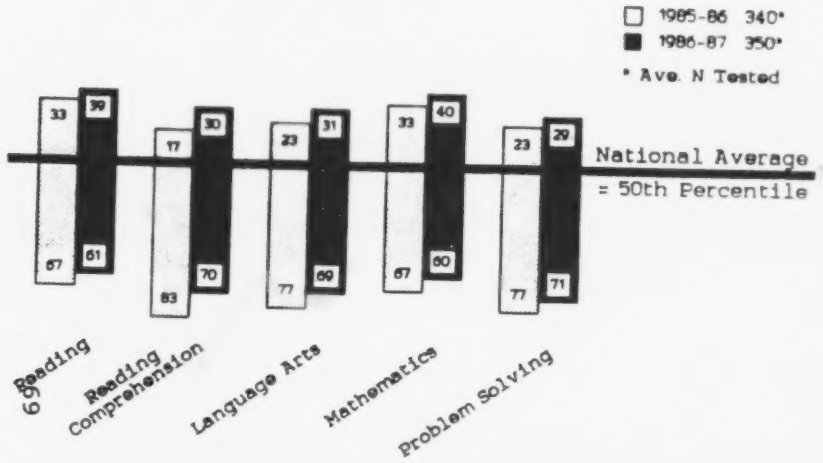


FIGURE TWO

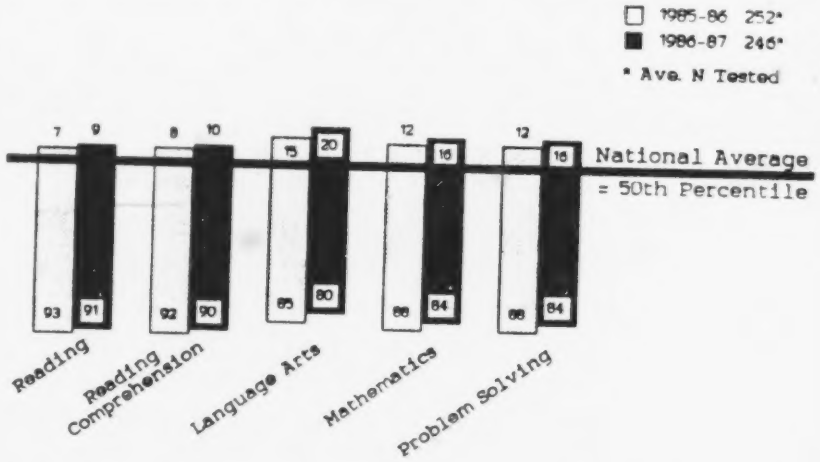
SCHOOL DISTRICT

PERCENTAGES OF STUDENTS SCORING ABOVE AND BELOW THE NATIONAL 50th PERCENTILE

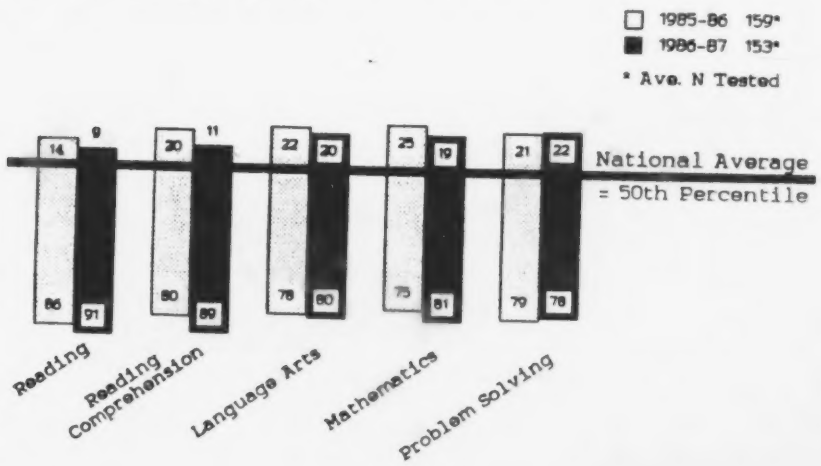
Early Elementary (K-3)



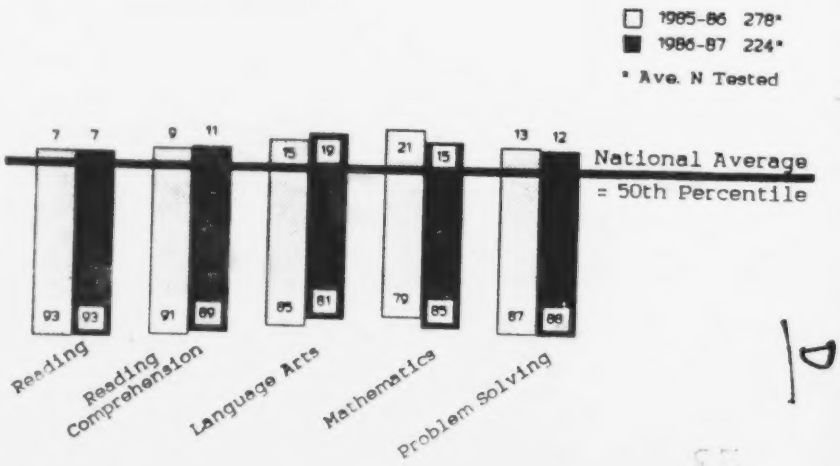
Intermediate (4-6)



Junior High (7-8)



High School (9-12)



SRA SURVEY OF BASIC SKILLS
GRADE 4

Reading: Comprehension

Directions: Read the story and choose the best answer for each question that follows.

It was the chanpionship game, and everyone was excited. The basketball players shouted as they moved up and down the court. A free throw tied the game 20 to 20 with a minute to go.

A great game! And the players moved around the court in wheelchairs. Rose rolled her chair near the basket and threw the ball. The crowd went wild. Their cheers were music to Rose. She smiled and waved as she thought of the silver cup the winning team would receive.

6. What will mosty likely happen after the story ends?
   A. Rose's team will agree to a return match.
   B. Rose's team will celebrate its victory.
   C. The other team will argue about the results.
   D. The game will go into overtime.

7. Where was Rose when she threw the ball?
   A. Near the basket
   B. Near the sideline
   C. On the free-throw line
   D. In the middle of the court

8. The crowd went wild because
   A. a free throw tied the game
   B. music begain to play
   C. Rose scored the winning points
   D. a silver cup was the prize

9. How did the other team most likely feel after Rose threw the ball?
   A. Proud
   B. Disappointed
   C. Excited
   D. Worried

10. What does the author mean by "their cheers were music to Rose"?
   A. The noise of the crowd was very loud.
   B. The band bellowed over the noise of the crowd.
   C. The noise of the crowd was pleasing.
   D. The noise of the crowd had a musical beat.

Mathematics: Computation

Directions: **Work these problems.**

2. 6966
+ 2052

A. 4914
B. 8914
C. 8918
D. 9018
E. None of these

8. 34,726
- 18,589

A. 16,137
B. 16,237
C. 16,246
D. 16,263
E. None of these

16. 294
x 70

A. 1438
B. 2058
C. 14,380
D. 20,584
E. None of these

26. $51.27
- 6.09

A. $44.18
B. $44.28
C. $45.18
D. $45.28
E. None of these

Mathematics: Concepts

Directions: Answers these questions.

2. How is sixty-four thousand five hundred nineteen written?
   A. 64,519
   B. 64,591
   C. 640,519
   D. 640,591

7. 777 rounded to the nearest hundred is
   A. 700
   B. 770
   C. 780
   D. 800

11. A factor of 49 is
   A. 8
   B. 7
   C. 6
   D. 3

20. 8.3 is read

   A. eight and three tenths
   B. eighty-three hundredths
   C. eight and three hundredths
   D. eight and three thousandths

Mathematics: Problem Solving

1. Mrs. Whitefoot bought 5 cans of soup. She paid $0.40 for each can.

   How much did Mrs. Whitefoot pay for the cans of soup?

   A. $0.08
   B. $0.35
   C. $0.45
   D. $2.00

17. Peter babysat Mrs. Gold's children 5 times this week and 4 times last week. Each time he sat for 2 hours.

   How many hours did Peter babysit Mrs. Gold's children in the 2 weeks?

   A. 40
   B. 18
   C. 11
   D. 7

22. Martha and Dominic went on a fishing trip. Martha caught 18 fish. Dominic caught 3 fewer fish than Martha.

   How many fish did they catch together?

   A. 54
   B. 33
   C. 21
   D. 15

26. Pedro sold raisins to earn money for the school fund. He sold 6 boxes a day for 5 days. He got a prize for every 10 boxes he sold.

   How many prizes did Pedro get?

   A. 2
   B. 3
   C. 5
   D. 10

Alaska Department of Education
March 1988

Raw Scores and Percentiles for one test widely used in Alaska

READING COMPREHENSION

Grade	Total # items	25%ile	75%ile
		Number of items correct	
4	50	20	36
8	50	24	39
10	50	24	40

MATHEMATICS

Grade	Total # items	25%ile	75%ile
		Number of items correct	
4	100	40	69
8	100	41	75
10	100	41	79

SRA SURVEY OF BASIC SKILLS
GRADES 9-12

Reading Comprehension

Directions: Read the passage and choose the best answer for each question that follows.

Today's computers might seem to be products of the twentieth century. Actually, the modern computer developed over centuries out of the genius of dreamers, theorists, engineers, and inventors. Five thousand years ago, the Chinese began using the abacus, a hand-operated calculating aid that is still in use in parts of the Middle East and Far East. By 1950, the computer as we know it had appeared, and since then, it has undergone spectacular improvements.

A French scientist and philosopher, Blaise Pascal, built a counting machine in the seventeenth century to aid in computing business accounts. Fifty years later, a German mathematician, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, invented an adding machine that was more advanced than Pascal's. Leibniz's machine not only counted; it could multiply, divide, and figure the square root of numbers.

The next leap in computer development was in the mid-1800s in England. For years, Charles Babbage, a mathematician, had been developing the idea of a general-purpose machine that could perform any mathematical operation. This machine would use punch cards containing both information and instructions stored in a memory bank and would print out the results. But Babbage's ideas were too advanced for his times. The machine was never completed, and his ideas were forgotten for almost a century.

Herman Hollerith invented for the United States Census Bureau the first major statistical machine built for large-scale use. Hollerith's machine completed the 1890 census in about one-third the time it would have taken to tally the data by hand.

In this century, the government's military needs spurred the development of the computer. Harvard professor Howard Aiken and his associated in 1944 constructed an electromechanical computer that used digits 0-9. At about the same time, the invention of the electronic computer speeded calculation by a thousand times.

John von Neumann conceived the idea of the stored program. He suggested that instructions could be stored inside the computer's electronic memory as numbers and modified by the computer itself as it went along. Von Neumann and his group, using some of Babbage's ideas from a hundred years earlier, developed the basic ideas of modern computer design in the twenty years following World War II.

14. The author probably hopes that, as a result of reading this passage, the reader will
    - A. be able to operate a computer
    - B. recognize the importance of mathematics
    - C. understand how the ideas for the computer have developed
    - D. comprehend the principles of computer programming

15. Which statement best summarized this passage?
    A. The electronic computer speeded calculation
    B. Modern computers use ideas developed over centuries.
    C. The ideas of Charles Babbage were far in advance of his time.
    D. Modern computers appeared in the 1950s.

16. Leibniz's machine was more advanced than that of Pascal because it
    A. was electronically operated
    B. performed more tasks
    C. stored more information
    D. could count

17. A first step in computer development was the invention of
    A. the abacus
    B. punch cards
    C. a statistical machine
    D. digital computers

18. Which of these is an opinion, NOT a fact?
    A. The abacus is still used in parts of the world.
    B. A machine counted the 1890 U.S. census.
    C. Spectacular improvements have been made in computers since 1950.
    D. Babbage made the most outstanding contribution to computer development.

19. If Charles Babbage had lived in the twentieth century, the modern computer might have
    A. never appeared
    B. taken a different direction
    C. developed more rapidly
    D. shown less improvement

Mathematics: Computation

Directions: Work these problems.

1. 10.9 + 4.21 =

A. 0.53
B. 5.3
C. 14.111
D. 24.111
E. None of these

6. 3.32
X 4.05

A. 1.494
B. 12.151
C. 13.446
D. 1344.6
E. None of these

14. 5 3/7
3 1/2
+ 6 9/14

A. 15 4/7
B. 15 1/2
C. 14 13/23
D. 14 13/14
E. None of these

40. Solve for n.

n% of 160=88

A. 55%
B. 78%
C. 140.8%
D. 181%
E. None of these

Mathematics: Concepts

Directions: Answer these questions.

2. 78 written as a product of prime number is

   A. $2^2 \times 3^3$
   B. 3 X 26
   C. 2 X 39
   D. 2 X 3 X 13

11. 37.3819 rounded to the nearest hundredth is

   A. 37.4
   B. 37.38
   C. 37.39
   D. 38.382

18. 146% is equal to

   A. 0.0146
   B. 0.146
   C. 1.46
   D. 14.6

20. $2x + 5 = 13$ has the same solution as

   A. $2x = 8$
   B. $2x = 13$
   C. $2x = 18$
   D. $7x = 13$

1. The East High School boys' basketball team took first place in the tournament with scores of 59, 70, 62, and 48.

   How many points did the team average per game?

   A. 56 1/4
   B. 57 1/4
   C. 58 3/4
   D. 59 3/4

8. Mr. Smith bought 2 boxes of disks for his computer on sale for $35 a box. The disks usually sell for $50 a box and each box contains 10 disks.

   How much did Mr. Smith save?

   A. $1.50
   B. $3.00
   C. $15.00
   D. $30.00

15. The estimated waste in tanner crab processing is about 85% of the original product. 30% of the waste can be recovered as meal for fertilizer.

    How many tons of meal can be recovered from 50,000 tons of waste?

    A. 42,500
    B. 15,000
    C. 4250
    D. 1500

30. Mrs. Jatho works 250 days a year. She can ride the bus to and from work for $2.00 a day or she can drive her car and pay $1.00 a day for parking. She estimates that gas and oil for driving to and from work would cost her $375 a year.

    Based on the information given, which of these statements are true?

    A. Taking the bus is about $125 more expensive than driving her car.
    B. Taking the bus is about twice as expensive as driving her car.
    C. Driving her car is about $125 more expensive than taking the bus.
    D. Driving her car is about twice as expensive as taking the bus.

Highlights from "Arriving in Lake Wobegon: Are Standardized Tests Exaggerating Achievement and Distorting Instruction?" by Daniel Koretz, RAND Corporation, in American Educator, Summer, 1988

---

1. Standardized tests, which are primarily indicators of achievement, are now our primary accountability measures, and educators warn that "overreliance on them can distort -- even degrade -- the curriculum."

2. The Cannell report, nicknamed "the Lake Wobegon" report, said all states were claiming to be above the national average. It contains many inaccuracies, but "there can be no doubt that current norm-referenced tests overstate achievement levels in many schools, districts, and states, often by a wide margin."

3. Scores may overstate achievement levels for several reasons:

- The norms against which students are measured may be as much as seven years old;
- Tests may be selected by school districts to most closely match a specific curriculum or the curriculum may be modified to match a specific test.
- Districts may decide to exclude certain categories of students (such as handicapped);
- Districts may afford too little security to the tests;.
- Teachers may "teach to the test."

4. "Teaching to the test" is appropriate to familiarize students with the format, but if undue time is given to subjects covered by the test or if multiple-choice formats such as are used in the tests are relied upon exclusively, other kinds of learning may be foregone.

6. "Test scores are not synonymous with achievement....They are merely incomplete and fallible indicators of achievement."

7. Given all of these issues, what is needed?

- To "re-establish the basic principle that, in most instances, test scores are not an end in themselves"
- To meet the public demand for accountability with a reasonable assessment program, not a crude one.

- To "recognize that when a test is used as a prod to raise achievement, its value as an indiator is compromised."

- To define reasonable and consistent standards for "teaching to the test."

8., There are some promising approaches to better tests and assessment, but they will be expensive and slow in coming.

9. [We] must attend to the aspects of a quality education that will not appear even in these more comprehensive measures of achievement. No set of achievement measures will alone tell us whether students are engaged and motivated, whether they enjoy school, and whether schools are giving them, not just some set of skills and information, but the enjoyment of learning and intrinsic motivation to learn that they will need to be well educated and successful throughout their lifetimes."

----------Comments----------

a. This is my summary of the 15-page article, except as indicated by quotation marks.

b. Although I agree with what Koretz has said in number 9 above, including the proposition that achievement measures cannot tell us a number of important things about a school, it is possible -- indeed, desirable -- to obtain such information through questionnaires and other means.

Bob Arnold 6/24/88

Highlights of Alaska High School Seniors Survey Report, 1986-87, Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education, Juneau, September, 1987, (53 pages)

1. Forty-four percent of the 6,649 seniors in Alaska's 211 public and private schools responded to the survey furnished them through their schools in the Fall of 1987. The demographic data show the return to be a representative sample.

2. About 15 percent of the 2,971 students responding rated their overall high school experience as "outstanding," about half as many as in recent years; almost 23 percent rated it as poor, more than twice as many as in previous years.

3. Here are the numbers of students who rated specific characteristics of their schools as "outstanding" or "poor":

	OUTSTANDING	POOR
Variety of courses	815	159
Quality of instruction	861	566
Counseling/guidance	675	340
Special help or programs	468	679
Rules, discipline	490	211
Assignment of grades	851	447
Athletic, recreational facilities	722	430
Library, learning centers	450	589
Laboratory facilities	832	266
Vocational training	781	270

4. Not surprisingly, satisfaction with facilities was greater among students attending schools enrolling more than 250 students. Seniors attending small schools rated "special help" for students as "outstanding" more than twice as often as their counterparts in large schools.

5. Courses thought most "outstanding," (with scores of 32 to 22 percent) were community-based learning, general science, western civilization, outdoor studies, and world history; courses thought most often of as "poor," with scores of 54 to 28 percent, were Native claims, Alaska history, outdoor studies, world history, geology, and physics.

6. Nearly half of the students said they needed more assistance in mathematics and career planning; more than one-third said they needed more assistance in reading and writing. The higher their family incomes, the less often they said they needed assistance.

7. Almost two-thirds of the seniors said they plan further schooling, with almost half of all seniors saying they planned to attend a four-year college. Nearly one of five of the others was undecided.

8. About half of the Native seniors said they plan further schooling, with almost one-third of all Native seniors saying they planned to attend a four-year college. More than one in four of the others was undecided.

9. Somewhat less than one-third of the seniors plan to attend postsecondary institutions in Alaska. Three of four who earned mostly A's in high school plan to attend out-of-state institutions.

---------- Comments ----------

a. Like most statewide data on school performance, these survey results don't tell us that our schools are good or poor, but they do tell us that schooling has been perceived as good by some and poor by others, and they do tell us in numbers and percentages what the seniors think was good and what was poor.

It also should be noted that schools vary in the quality of their performance, a conclusion the public shares with educational researchers, and this senior survey does not make any school- by-school comparison.

b. I believe it to be true that educational researchers agree that critical elements in any assessment of school performance are the assessments of students, parents, and teachers. In his extensive study of schools (of which more later), John Goodlad found both differences and similarities in the the opinions of the groups when he asked them what they perceived to be school problems.

c. Since seniors in private schools were also surveyed, I have asked Kerry Romesburg of the Postsecondary Commission whether any data could be aggregated from their responses, and I should be having his reply soon.

d. The Postsecondary Commission's survey of 1988 seniors has now been completed, but the analysis and summary has yet to be accomplished. Once some progress is made in aggregating the data, Kerry will call me so that I may review it.

Bob Arnold 6/29/88

Highlights of "Alaska ACT Assessment Results, 1986-87," American College Testing Program, Iowa City, Iowa, and a supplementary analysis prepared by the Alaska Department of Education, Juneau.

---

1. In the 1987 graduating classes there were 1,146 women and 948 men who had taken the ACT, about 37 percent of the graduates. The composite score of these 2,094 persons was 18.7, identical to the national average, but lower than the 19.4 average in the seven western states.

2. In specific subject areas, Alaska averages were .7 below the national average in English and .2 below in mathematics. In two areas, Alaska averages were above: social studies,.2, and natural sciences, .4.

3. Seventeen percent of all Alaska students earned composite scores of 26 to 36, the highest possible; only three percent of Alaska Native students earned such scores.

4. Compared to the composite score of 21.0 of Caucasian students taking the test, the composite score for Natives was 11.6 (based upon the scores of 385 persons).

5. Although 53 percent of all Alaska students had taken second year algebra, only 11 percent of Native students had; although 48 percent of all students had taken chemistry, only 8 percent of Native students had; and although 67 percent had taken American history, only 15 percent of Native students had. Scores of Native students who had taken such courses, however, closely resembled the scores of all students.

6. Fifty-eight percent of the students said they were satisfied with the quality of instruction in their high schools, the same percentage as Americans generally; only 49 percent of the Native students were satisfied. The levels of satisfaction reported with various aspects of high schools are generally declining.

7. Half of the ACT-tested Alaskans said they needed help in educational/occupational planning, 46 percent said mathematics skills, 44 percent said study skills, and 30 percent said writing and reading. These were similar to regional and national percentages.

---------- Comments ----------

a. While the ACT average scores put Alaskans below national averages in math and English (.2 and .7, respectively), the SAT scores put Alaskans above in both (by 3 points and 15 points respectively). This is a reminder, I suppose, that tests are imperfect measures and should be viewed only as indicators of achievement.

b. Even though 43 percent of the seniors took the SAT and 37 percent took the ACT, it doesn't mean that 80 percent of the seniors took the test; some uncertain number of students took both tests.

c. The meaning of the final sentence in paragraph 5 above is that what is taught can be learned. Stated another way, if you don't offer courses in American history, don't expect your students to do well on tests which include that subject.

c. The kind of detailed information supplied by ACT that I have drawn upon for this summary is not supplied by SAT.

Bob Arnold 7/1/88

Historical summary of ACT and SAT scores from "Facts and Figures about Education in Alaska, 1988," Alaska Department of Education.

SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT SCORES (SAT) - ALASKA STUDENTS

STATEWIDE AVERAGE SCORES

Year	Math	Verbal	% who took SAT
1987	479	445	45
1986	479	445	41
1985	477	446	40.6
1984	471	443	34.3
1983	468	437	32.6
1982	477	446	30.9
1981	486	449	29.4
1980	482	450	29.6
1979	478	452	N/A
1978	485	458	N/A
1977	487	459	N/A
1976	485	454	N/A
1975	481	461	N/A

SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT SCORES (SAT) - U.S. STUDENTS

NATIONAL AVERAGE SCORES

Year	Math	Verbal
1987	476	430
1986	475	431
1985	475	431
1984	471	426
1983	468	425
1982	467	426
1981	466	424
1980	466	424
1979	467	427
1978	468	429
1977	470	429
1976	472	431
1975	472	434

About 45 percent of U.S. high school seniors took the SAT test in 1987.

AMERICAN COLLEGE TEST (ACT) SCORES

Alaska Composite Scores		% who took ACT
1987	18.7	36.8
1986	18.1	39.8
1985	17.6	38.9
1984	18.2	37.9
1983	18.0	39.0
1982	18.7	32.6
1981	18.8	34.6

National Composite Scores	
1987	18.7
1986	18.8
1985	18.6
1984	18.5
1983	18.3
1982	18.4
1981	18.5

About 31 percent of the U.S. high school seniors took the ACT in 1987.

Extract from "State Education Statistics: Student Performance, Resource Inputs, State Reforms, and Population Characteristics, 1982 and 1987, U. S. Department of Education, February 1988, wall chart.

	U. S. average	Alaska	Alaska rank
STUDENT PERFORMANCE			
ACT score (28 states)	18.7	18.7	19th
percent of graduates taking	--	37.1	--
percent scoring over 26	13.5	17.0	5th
to recover from scores of 60's			.9
SAT score (22 states)	906	924*	4th
percent of graduates taking		43.0*	
percent scoring over 600	8.1/18.3	10/17*	
Advanced placement candidates as percentage of graduates	9.7	13.3	9th
Adjusted graduation rate	71.5	68.3	36th
to meet 90 percent by 1990		21.7	
RESOURCE INPUTS			
Average teacher salary (est.1987)	$26,551	$43,970	1st
Pupil/teacher ratio (1987)	17.8	16.7	22nd
Pupil/staff ratio (1987)	9.4	11.0	43rd
Federal $ as percent of revenues(1986)	6.7	10.2	11th
Expenditures: per pupil (1986)	$3,752	$8,253	1st
:as percent of income per capita	25.6	46.4	1st
:for teachers as percent of total	40.6	34.8	50th
POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS			
Per capita income (1986)	$14,641	$17,796	4th
Percent poverty, ages 5-17 (1980)	15.3	11.4	38th
Minority percent of enrollment (1987)	30.0	34.0	14th
Handicapped percent of enrollment (1987)	11.0	11.3	19th

STATE REFORMS (summary)

Minimum competency testing for grade promotion and for graduation and first graduating class assessed: Sixteen states require competency testing for graduation, four states require competency testing for promotion, and six states require it for both. One state will require it for graduation beginning in 1990.

State intervention in academically bankrupt districts and year implemented: Seven states have adopted policies to intervene in school districts where students are performing below specified state levels.

Teacher incentives based on student performance: Four states have adopted programs and three states have established pilot programs.

Alternative teacher certification offered in state: Six states have established internship/apprenticeship certification for persons meeting minimum requirements(such as a bachelor's degree) and twenty-five states have adopted provisional certificates to allow persons to teach while completing other requirements.

Teachers required to take certification exam: Forty states require entering teachers to take an examination and three states require it of both entering and current teachers.

* These data were omitted from the wall chart, but were furnished me by the Alaska Department of Education.

---------- Comments ----------

a. Although Education Secretary William Bennett's wall charts have been applauded as a means of calling public attention to issues of school performance and his call for school reform, the indicators of performance have been heavily criticized by educators as too simplistic, flawed, and susceptible of misinterpretation. In my view, both the applause and criticism are warranted.

b. Another reason educators have complained of the wall chart portrayal of school performance is that all measures used are academic or intellectual measures, but goals for schools nearly always include three other kinds of goals -- vocational, civic/social, and personal.

c. The percentage of Alaska's students who place in the high range of both the SAT and the ACT testify to high achievement by some students in our schools. (It would be instructive to know what percentage of our test takers, and those of other states, fall into the lowest category.) Our graduation rate, on the other hand, is a serious problem.

d. Action by the several states favoring competency testing of several kinds shows moderate to strong support for the reforms advocated by the U. S. Department of Education. More on this later.

Bob Arnold 6/30/88

Highlights from American Education: Making It Work, A report to the President and the American People, April 1988, by William J. Bennett, U. S. Secretary of Education, 60 pages.

HOW FAR HAVE WE COME?

1. Since 1982 SAT scores have risen slightly, with higher achievers continuing to make gains. There has been little change in ACT scores.

2. In reading, writing, and math skills, some gains are reported among young Americans, but serious deficiencies in those abilities exist.

3. Seventeen year olds "don't know much" about major authors and literature, history, or geography, and teenagers fall far below their foreign counterparts in science knowledge.

4. There has been an increase in the percentage of students taking a solid academic curriculum.

5. Indicators of school performance:

- Average daily attendance rose to 94.2 percent (1985).
- Schools are devoting about 22 hours of the 30-hour school week to instruction, but they are seeking to increase that percentage.
- Sixty percent of high school juniors reported doing less than one hour of homework each day (1984).
- A few states have lengthened the school year, but only to 180 days.
- Drug use and discipline problems remain serious impediments to learning.
- Dropout rates continue to be alarmingly high, especially among black and Hispanic males.

6. "In short, student achievement and school performance earn a mixed grade for progress during the past five years. Despite encouraging improvements in patterns of course-taking, gains in student learning are slight and the average level of student skill and knowledge remains unacceptably low. Overall school performance is up a little bit since 1983, but by almost any standard we are still not where we need to be."

WHAT WE NEED TO DO (extracts)

Strengthen Content

1. Common sense tells us, and education research confirms, that youngsters rarely learn what they do not study. Since students study what adults teach, it is important for adults to define essential knowledge and resolve to teach it well.

2. Without the right curriculum, efforts to improve teaching, governance and school accountability will make little difference.

3. Providing a strong curriculum is a requirement even of the earliest school grades; too often our schools delay the introduction of serious academic material for too long.

4. ... it is important now to concentrate not just on which subjects our students study, but on the actual content of the courses they take.

5. ... a general American consensus does exist about the most compelling ideas and books and authors our students should know.

6. ... tracking [may not] deliver...appropriate content to some students. For example, in place of the basics, vocational education too often drills students in overly specialized and frequently obsolete "job skills."

7. [The lack of preparedness among some] is not an argument for abandoning any high school student in the present. If one student, for whatever reason, cannot learn algebra and geometry in two years, then he should be given the additional time and help he needs. But he should learn algebra and geometry.

Ensure Equal Intellectual Opportunity

1. A wealth of recent research suggests that what a student studies in high school -- regardless of race or family background -- is the best predictor of educational success.

2. Striking evidence exists that the higher educational expectations associated with school reform have especially benefited students from minority and disadvantaged backgrounds.

3. Mastering a solid curriculum isn't easy for any student, and for disadvantaged youngsters it may take more learning time and creative teaching strategies. The essential point is that all must have a chance at rich and fulfilling learning.

4. Nothing influences learning so much as attitudes and beliefs about what produces it. Educational achievement by students comes of clear purpose, high expectations, strong and persistent teaching, and hard work.

5. ... Albert Shanker, president of the American Federation of Teachers, has argued, "If we adjust class content up or down to the differences students come to us with, we will perpetuate those differences. If we expect all students to master a rich common core curriculum, there will still be differences, but they will be far narrower."

6. Today many able and eager American children are not learning enough, and too often it's because of an unwarranted pessimism that leads tc lower expectations for disadvantaged children. [Many of them face obstacles to achievement outside the control of schools.] But this makes it all the more important that schools do everything they can to provide all their students with the best education possible.

ESTABLISH AN ETHOS OF ACHIEVEMENT (extracts)

1. There are many elementary and secondary schools throughout America where a spirit of achievement and success thrives.... They have strong principals who express clear educational goals and who hold both teachers and students to high standards of achievement. They have teaching staffs of competent professionals who believe it important to shape students' character as well as intellect. They enforce discipline consistently and fairly.

2. In three particular areas -- the teaching of basic moral principles, the establishment of order and discipline, and the encouragement of solid work habits -- our schools need marked improvement if they are to develop a true ethos of achievement.

3. Some educators may fret [over the issue of moral lessons, but] ....Surely no one would deny that honesty is a trait our schools should reinforce. No one would argue that courage is less than admirable. These two virtues do not belong exclusively to any one subgroup in American life; they are consensus ideals that we all honor. And there are others -- including integrity, generosity, independence, fidelity, kindness, respect for law, patriotism, diligence, fairness, and self-discipline.

4. Our teachers and principals must be men and women willing to articulate ideals and convictions to students, and, of course, to conduct themselves accordingly.

5. Subtle help comes from the curriculum that a good school should already be pursuing. Many of the clearest moral lessons can be found in classic stories from literature and history.

6. A large part of any school's ethos derives simply from [the care that is taken of the school itself]....Even more basic to the establishment of a positive school ethos is student discipline. Regular and prompt attendance, respect for teachers, and good conduct go hand in hand with academic success.

7. Students must be given clear standards of conduct; they must know what is expected of them. They should also know the consequences of wrongdoing.

8. There is a simple explanation for the fact that virtually all international studies show American students being outperformed by their foreign counterparts: children in many other countries spend more time in class and their teachers use that time more efficiently. In other words, both teachers and students in other countries do more work.

Recruit and Reward Good Teachers and Principals

1. The most important determinant of a school's ethos is its staff.

2. We cannot expect our schools to improve, nor our children to achieve, so long as we adhere to a hiring and promotion system that rewards longevity over performance; that puts more stock in paper credentials than in knowledge, energy, and enthusiasm; and that pretends good teachers and good principals are to be found only among graduates of schools of education.

3. What are the attributes of a good teacher? First, a thorough knowledge of the subject he or she proposes to teach. Second, the ability and desire to communicate that knowledge to students. And third, sound character.

4. Many states...have instituted teacher recruitment programs designed to attract individuals with expertise and experience who may lack formal education school course credits.

5. We should test current teachers as well as new teachers for competency, and the tests must be demanding enough to screen out those who have no business in our classrooms.... Tests are meaningless, however, if virtually anyone can pass. And that seems to be the case with many current teacher exams.

6. Paper-and-pencil tests are necessary, but they are not sufficient guarantors of instructional competence. Regular evaluations of actual teaching performance, carried out in the classroom by peers and administrators, need to become part of the management routine of every school.

7. Until good teachers are paid more than bad ones, our efforts to improve teaching and learning will be frustrated.

8. Good schools have good principals -- leaders who articulate clear goals, leaders who show the ability and authority necessary to get teachers and students working toward those goals.

9. Whether they come from teaching or other professions, principals need better training than most now get.

10. Someone needs to be responsible for the performance of our schools, and principals -- as their chief executive officers -- are the logical choice.

Institute Accountability

1. There are greater, more certain, and more immediate penalties in this country for serving up a single rotten hamburger in a restaurant than for repeatedly furnishing a thousand children with a rotten education.

2. The trouble [with education] is not our level of investment; rather it is the low rate of return we get for it.

3. Ironically...as the United States has in recent years raised and spent unprecedented revenues for education, the proportion of education spending actually devoted to classroom instruction has declined.

4. ....allowing parents greater flexibility to determine which schools their children will attend has lately been gaining public favor, despite opposition from much of the organized education establishment.

5. ...programs that promote parental choice...create one of the most effective accountability systems possible.

6. [Illinois issues] annual school "report cards" on every one of its nearly 4,000 public schools.

7. Perhaps the most decisive measure a state can take to ensure accountability is to intervene directly in the management of a failed school district.

8. Recognizing and rewarding extraordinary school employeees is one of the most important and direct ways of instituting accountability.

9. But, while we are rewarding success, we must at the same time hold incompetent teachers and unsuccessful administrators fully accountable. They should be given opportunities to improve, but if they do not improve they should be dismissed.

10. Accountability is the linchpin of education reform.

Conclusion

American education can be made to work better, and it can be made to work better now. Every reform measure recommended in this report is already in place and working today in various schools, communities, and states. Each can be replicated in most, quite possibly all, of our 50 state, 16,000 school districts, and more than 100,000 schools. And this work can be done soon.

----------Comments ----------

1. Having read these extracts, you probably will have found much to agree with, but you will also have learned why Bennett excites such controversy.

2. Although I have misgivings about some of Bennett's remedies, I especially like the confidence he expresses that most children can learn much more than too many now do, if schools will ask it of them and if they will take into account that it will take longer for some children to learn some things than other children. I am reminded of the North Slope Borough Schools' report to the people: while many districts say their goal is to "provide learning opportunities," North Slope Borough Superintendent Shirley Holloway says, "Our business is to make sure that children learn."

3. With regard to discipline codes, Bennett points out that students need to know what is expected of them, and I certainly agree. It is also true that students need to know what is expected of them in each course -- what they will know once they have completed the course -- and they are more likely to achieve it.

4. Last week I telephoned Illinois officials seeking information on their school "report cards" and on the school reform act enacted in 1985.

Bob Arnold 7/7/88

A portrayal of school performance indicators, summarized from the Report of Committee on Coordinating Educational Research and Information, Council of Chief State School Officers, Washington, D. C., 1985.

INDICATORS OF SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

EMPLOYED BY OTHER STATES

Indicators of mastery of basic skills and knowledge

- standardized achievement tests, ACT, and SAT
- specialized tests, such as computer literacy
- minimum competency tests
- number of National Merit Scholars, semi-finalists
- college success rates

Indicators of competence in life skills

- proportion of graduates in jobs or training
- proportion of graduates registered to vote and voting
- opinion of employers regarding performance of graduates
- increase in youth employment levels in the state

Indicators of motivation to learn

- attendance and graduation rates
- number of suspensions and expulsions
- homework completed
- enrollment in advanced placement or other demanding courses
- percent taking 4 years of English, 3 years of mathematics, and 3 years of science
- percent enrolling in postsecondary education

Indicators of client/staff perceptions

- community perception of school outcomes
- student/parent/staff assessment of school climate
- student assessment of adequacy of school program
- employer ranking of satisfaction with school program

Other Indicators

- accommodation of working parents in scheduling conferences with teachers and by maintaining extended office hours
- provision of professional or volunteer assistance in homework beyond the regular school day

----------Notes and comments----------

a. Even though achievement test scores are accepted by virtually all educators as useful and important measures of performance, most authorities caution against an overreliance on test scores in considering how well a school is performing. Accordingly, I prepared this summary to illustrate the range of indicators that are being employed by states to assess how their schools are performing.

b. There is even greater variation among the states than is suggested by my summary in that differing grade levels are tested, differing instruments are used, and there are differing formulations of indicators.

c. In addition to the indicators I have listed, states use a variety of what are called "input" indicators -- things like pupil/teacher ratios, number of teachers holding advanced degreees, teacher salaries and teacher turnover, hours of time devoted to instruction, teacher evaluation checklists, percent of schools accredited, and other factors that are believed to affect school outcomes.

d. The information I drew upon was collected by the Council of Chief State School Officers as part of its effort to give leadership to improve assessment and evaluation of America's schools. Forty-five states responded, but some of them reported that they did not collect indicators of performance.

e. Alaska's response (1985) was as follows: "The Effective Schooling Program lists leadership, school environment, curriculum, classroom instruction and management, and assessment and evaluation as key components of successful schools. Local school districts are given the responsibility to develop specific actions and to monitor progress within general guidelines issued by the state."

Bob Arnold 7/11/88
rev. form 10/11/88

Highlights of A Status Report: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment in Alaska School Districts, 1987-88, Alaska Department of Education, Juneau, 1988, 63 pages.

---

1. Since 1984, each of the 55 school districts has been required by regulation to adopt a curriculum describing what will be taught in grades K-12. Such a curriculum is to include goals, content, a means of evaluating effectiveness, a plan for periodic review, and a means of measuring results -- at least in reading in math.

2. In this fourth annual survey, 49 districts said, among other things, their boards had adopted a school curriculum, but 12 said they did not have a way to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum and 13 said they had not established a 6-year review cycle.

3. Most districts report that they have developed elementary curriculum guides in the five subject areas needed for later graduation from high school (language arts, social studies, mathematics, science, and health/physical education). In other subject areas, 30 to 40 districts report development of curriculum guides.

4. Fifty districts report that they have developed secondary curriculum guides in the subject areas required for graduation. Fewer districts have developed guides for electives.

5. The State Board of Education requires a student to earn no fewer than 21 secondary credits for graduation. Forty-three districts require from 21 to 22.5 credits; the remaining districts require 23 to 25 credits.

6. Since 16 of the required credits are named by the State Board, there is much similarity among districts in their graduation requirements, often differing only by half or whole credit additions to the State requirement. Some districts, however, require credits in vocational education (up to four) or fine arts (up to one). Credits that may be earned through electives range from six to ten among the districts.

7. In this year's survey, additional questions were asked about language arts and and fine arts. Among other things, the survey disclosed that:

- 39 districts allocate time to language arts at the elementary level, allocating from 15 [sic] to 1,050

- 41 districts allocate time to language arts at the junior high/middle school level, allocating 10 [sic] to 900 minutes per week to the subject;

- 44 districts allocate time to fine arts at the elementary level, allocating 25 to 580 minutes per week to the subject; and

- 46 districts allocate time to fine arts at the junior high/middle school level, allocating 80 to 925 minutes per week to the subject.

8. In these selected subject areas (which vary each year), districts also report on texts being used, what their needs and strengths are, the names of their courses, etc.

---------- Comments ----------

a. At the same time this report demonstrates the Department of Education's oversight and monitoring role, its content testifies that the goals, content, and effectiveness of schooling in Alaska are very much a matter of local control.

b. As you will have observed from my summary, this report makes no qualitative assessment of a school's curriculum guides, instruments of assessment, texts, time spent in the subject areas, or other matters.

c. Even though it has been four years since each district was required to adopt a curriculum, some districts have not yet done so; some that have done so have failed to meet other requirements of the regulation, such as having developed a means of evaluating effectiveness.

d. The value of the report is somewhat diminished, in my opinion, by the failure of some districts to respond to questions or their failure to answer them with care (such as minutes per week spent in specific subject areas).

e. To the extent district reports are correct, the time spent on subject areas in grades K-8 varies greatly among districts. Some districts do not allocate time, but leave that matter to individual schools.

f. A previous year's report shows that, of the districts that allocate time to math, the time allocated ranges from 60 to 300 minutes per week. These kind of data on other subjects are available in other reports.

g. Although the State Board of Education has fixed time requirements of 16 credits (of 8,100 minutes each) for grades 9-12 in certain subject areas (along with 5 credits of electives), it has not established any time requirements for the first eight years of schooling in any subject areas.

Extracts on the subject of goals from A Place Called School, John I. Goodlad, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1984, 396 pages.

---

1. ...the first priority for each state is to articulate as basic policy a commitment to the four broad areas of educational goals that have steadily emerged in this nation.

2. [At the beginning of our study we] examined a vast array of documents reporting the ongoing effort to define, over a period of more than three hundred years, the goals of eduation and schooling in this country.... We concluded that four broad areas of goals for the schools have emerged. They are the following:

- academic, embracing all intellectual skills and domains of knowledge;
- vocational, geared to developing readiness for productive work and economic responsibility;
- social and civic, related to preparing for socialization into a complex society; and
- personal, emphasizing the development of individual responsibility, talent, and free expression.

3. Some people would argue that there is not and cannot be agreement on a set of educational goals for schools. If not, how is it that we seem to know what specific proficiencies we want students to acquire and what tests to use in determining their competence? Clearly, there is an inconsistency here.

4. Others say that general goals are too vague and mean different things to different people. Of course; that is their virtue. They provide a common sense of direction but also some room for interpretation and adaptation to meet varying local circumstances.

4. [After reviewing hundreds of state and district goal-type documents]...my observation is that [they] do not command attention. Commitments and expectations are there, if one digs for them, but lack precision, clarity, and authority. Neither state nor district officials come out loud and clear as to what our schools are for and how they intend to fulfill those commitments.

5. I offer ...a set of goals derived from the historical review...and an analysis of state documents. [see attachment] ....They might very well serve as a beginning point in the dialogue about education and what schools are for that should be underway in this nation.

----------Comments ----------

a. Since I agree with Goodlad, I was a little more than astonished to learn that Alaska has adopted no statement of goals for schooling. In 1982 the Governor's Task Force on Effective Schooling recommended adoption of goals based upon an earlier Goodlad book, but it was not acted upon by the State Board.

b. The State Board has adopted a dozen model curriculum guides, each of which contains a goal statement, and the Department disseminates other materials that provide some guidance to districts.

c. The State Board has developed draft goals for itself, but they are not, in themselves, goals for schooling. One initiative, however, looks to the development of a "model set of outcomes and competencies ... to be used as a framework by school districts." More on this later.

d. Although I think that it takes a list about as long as Goodlad's to describe goals of schooling, I also think that for most undertakings it is desirable to write a concise statement which summarizes the goal of the undertaking so that every participant can recite it from memory, rather than having to resort to a list. Accordingly, I have tried to draft one that could discussed as a possible working definition for this committee:

> The goal of schooling in Alaska is to assure that graduates will:
>
> - succeed in their next level of education or work,
>
> - shape worthwhile and satisfying lives for themselves,
>
> - manifest the best values of society, and
>
> - be effective in influencing the kind of society we live in.

Keeping in mind that goal statements declare our resolute intentions, I ask you to consider the foregoing statement (or some revision of it) as representing what the committee thinks ought to be the outcomes of schooling.

e. Even if the State had established goals for schooling, <u>measuring</u> achievement of the goals would be out of the question. But <u>estimating</u> achievement on the basis of

well-chosen performance indicators would be possible, as well as meaningful. Without explicit State goals, how can performance indicators be wisely chosen?

f. Another value of statements of goals of schooling is one of more fully informing students and parents of what the intended outcomes of the process are. Furnishing a 60-item list of what should be true of a student at graduation when that student first enters the school should help give meaning to all the coursework and activities that take place over the ensuing twelve years. Periodic review by parents would help them estimate the progress their children are making toward the goals, and would stimulate not only discussions between the parents and their children, but also parental involvement with the school.

Bob Arnold 7/15/88

Extract from A Place Called School by John Goodlad, 1984

The list is presented here to guide school board members, parents, students, and teachers in the needed effort to achieve a common sense of direction for their schools and to build programs of teaching and learning related to these goals. They might very well serve as a beginning point in the dialogue about education and what schools are for that should be underway in this nation. There is no need to begin from scratch, as though we have no goals for schooling. Rather, we should be addressing ourselves to such questions as the significance and meaning of these goals, whether or not they are adequately comprehensive, their implications for educational policy and practice, and whether or not we intend to carry out what they imply for teaching and learning.

GOALS FOR SCHOOLING IN THE U.S.

A. Academic Goals

1. Mastery of basic skills and fundamental processes
   - 1.1 Learn to read, write, and handle basic arithmetical operations.
   - 1.2 Learn to acquire ideas through reading and listening.
   - 1.3 Learn to communicate ideas through writing and speaking.
   - 1.4 Learn to utilize mathematical concepts.
   - 1.5 Develop the ability to utilize available sources of information.

2. Intellectual development
   - 2.1 Develop the ability to think rationally, including problem-solving skills, application of principles of logic, and skill in using different modes of inquiry.
   - 2.2 Develop the ability to use and evaluate knowledge, i.e., critical and independent thinking that enables one to make judgments and decisions in a wide variety of life roles—citizen, consumer, worker, etc.—as well as in intellectual activities.
   - 2.3 Accumulate a general fund of knowledge, including information and concepts in mathematics, literature, natural science, and social science.
   - 2.4 Develop positive attitudes toward intellectual activity, including curiosity and a desire for further learning.
   - 2.5 Develop an understanding of change in society.

B. Vocational Goals

3. Career education–vocational education:
   - 3.1 Learn how to select an occupation that will be personally satisfying and suitable to one's skills and interests.
   - 3.2 Learn to make decisions based on an awareness and knowledge of career options.
   - 3.3 Develop salable skills and specialized knowledge that will prepare one to become economically independent.
   - 3.4 Develop habits and attitudes, such as pride in good workmanship, that will make one a productive participant in economic life.
   - 3.5 Develop positive attitudes toward work, including acceptance of the necessity of making a living and an appreciation of the social value and dignity of work.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

C. Social, Civic, and Cultural Goals

4. Interpersonal understandings
   - 4.1 Develop a knowledge of opposing value systems and their influence on the individual and society.
   - 4.2 Develop an understanding of how members of a family function under different family patterns as well as within one's own family.
   - 4.3 Develop skill in communicating effectively in groups.
   - 4.4 Develop the ability to identify with and advance the goals and concerns of others.
   - 4.5 Learn to form productive and satisfying relations with others based on respect, trust, cooperation, consideration, and caring.
   - 4.6 Develop a concern for humanity and an understanding of international relations.
   - 4.7 Develop an understanding and appreciation of cultures different from one's own.

5. Citizenship participation
   - 5.1 Develop historical perspective.
   - 5.2 Develop knowledge of the basic workings of the government.
   - 5.3 Develop a willingness to participate in the political life of the nation and the community.
   - 5.4 Develop a commitment to the values of liberty, government by consent of the governed, representational government, and one's responsibility for the welfare of all.
   - 5.5 Develop an understanding of the interrelationships among complex organizations and agencies in a modern society, and learn to act in accordance with it.
   - 5.6 Exercise the democratic right to dissent in accordance with personal conscience.
   - 5.7 Develop economic and consumer skills necessary for making informed choices that enhance one's quality of life.
   - 5.8 Develop an understanding of the basic interdependence of the biological and physical resources of the environment.
   - 5.9 Develop the ability to act in light of this understanding of interdependence.

6. Enculturation
   - 6.1 Develop insight into the values and characteristics, including language, of the civilization of which one is a member.
   - 6.2 Develop an awareness and understanding of one's cultural heritage and become familiar with the achievements of the past that have inspired and influenced humanity.
   - 6.3 Develop understanding of the manner in which traditions from the past are operative today and influence the direction and values of society.
   - 6.4 Understand and adopt the norms, values, and traditions of the groups of which one is a member.
   - 6.5 Learn how to apply the basic principles and concepts of the fine arts and humanities to the appreciation of the aesthetic contributions of other cultures.

7. Moral and ethical character
   - 7.1 Develop the judgment to evaluate events and phenomena as good or evil.
   - 7.2 Develop a commitment to truth and values.
   - 7.3 Learn to utilize values in making choices.
   - 7.4 Develop moral integrity.
   - 7.5 Develop an understanding of the necessity for moral conduct.

D. Personal Goals

8. Emotional and physical well-being
   - 8.1 Develop the willingness to receive emotional impressions and to expand one's affective sensitivity.
   - 8.2 Develop the competence and skills for continuous adjustment and emotional stability, including coping with social change.
   - 8.3 Develop a knowledge of one's own body and adopt health practices that support and sustain it, including avoiding the consumption of harmful or addictive substances.
   - 8.4 Learn to use leisure time effectively.
   - 8.5 Develop physical fitness and recreational skills.
   - 8.6 Develop the ability to engage in constructive self-criticism.

The emotional stability and the physical fitness of the student are perceived in state goals as necessary conditions for attaining the other objectives. But physical well-being, emotional sensitivity, and realistic acceptance of self and others also are ends in themselves.

9. Creativity and aesthetic expression
   - 9.1 Develop the ability to deal with problems in original ways.
   - 9.2 Develop the ability to be tolerant of new ideas.
   - 9.3 Develop the ability to be flexible and to consider different points of view.
   - 9.4 Develop the ability to experience and enjoy different forms of creative expression.
   - 9.5 Develop the ability to evaluate various forms of aesthetic expression.
   - 9.6 Develop the willingness and ability to communicate through creative work in an active way.
   - 9.7 Seek to contribute to cultural and social life through one's artistic, vocational, and avocational interests.

10. Self-realization
   - 10.1 Learn to search for meaning in one's activities, and develop a philosophy of life.
   - 10.2 Develop the self-confidence necessary for knowing and confronting one's self.
   - 10.3 Learn to assess realistically and live with one's limitations and strengths.
   - 10.4 Recognize that one's self-concept is developed in interaction with other people.
   - 10.5 Develop skill in making decisions with purpose.
   - 10.6 Learn to plan and organize the environment in order to realize one's goals.
   - 10.7 Develop willingness to accept responsibility for one's own decisions and their consequences.
   - 10.8 Develop skill in selecting some personal, life-long learning goals and the means to attain them.

Senate Special Committee on School Performance No. 10

Summary of major recommendations to Alaska's State Board of Education from Effective Schooling Practices, a report of the Governor's Task Force on Effective Schooling, Juneau, 1981, 76 pages.

---

1. Adopt a policy declaring that instruction is a shared responsibility, schools should strive to encourage learning, but the student must assume responsibility for his/her own learning.

2. Adopt goals of education for Alaska as recommended by the Task Force. (A list of goals similar to the one proposed by John Goodlad.)

3. Require kindergarten to be offered (as an option) in all school districts.

4. Define required and elective course for study in elementary, junior high, and high school consistent with the Task Force recommendations. (See Attachment A.)

5. Adopt a statement of research-based effective schooling practices (resembling Attachment B) as a regulation, specifying timelines for implementation.

   a. Revise teacher evaluation regulations to incorporate effective practices in the scope of the evaluation.

   b. Design a monitoring program, a plan for reporting, a training manual, and syllabi on effective schooling practices.

   c. Provide in-service training on effective practices, giving priority to training principals to be instructional leaders.

   d. Develop an assessment program to measure the results of effective schooling practices.

6. Seek additional funding for continuing reviews of educational research (twelve areas identified).

7. Extend school year for in-service training of staff without loss of instructional time.

8. Consider extending school year for "unhurried, planned, and productive" sessions between parents and teachers.

---------- Comments ----------

a. None of the major recommendations of the Task Force were ever adopted by the State Board of Education.

b. This was the most important, comprehensive effort I know of to influence the performance of schools in Alaska. Some studies look to single aspects of schooling; this one asked what schools are for, what should be taught, what kind of school climate encourages learning, what training of professional staff is required, and so on.

c. Most of what was recommended seven years ago in this report continues to be advocated by persons and organizations concerned about school performance today -- articulation of goals, specificity in course requirements, attitudes and strategies of effective teachers, determined efforts to reach parents and make them a part of the schooling enterprise, the need for high expectations of students, respect and understanding of various cultures, and so on.

d. I am told that a number of factors account for the failure of the Board to take action on the report -- the change of administration and state board membership, change of commissioners, opposition of some groups, and loss of funding for training of staff.

e. Despite the absence of action by the board, some of the information in the report provided the foundation for leadership academies and workshops sponsored by the Department of Education and University, and for revision of standards for accreditation by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges.

f. This report was the product of a 15-person group, including representatives of education organizations, higher education, parents, and students.

g. Research reviews were conducted for the Task Force under contract for about $105,000. They covered the issues of class size, computer-assisted instruction, ability grouping, instructional grouping, parent participation, time factors in learning, and the principal as instructional leader.

Bob Arnold 7/26/88

Attachment A

Elementary Curriculum

In considering curricular offerings at the elementary level the Task Force regarded them according to categories as follows:

1. **Required** — *those skills or content areas to be requirements for all students in all schools.*

2. **Local Option** — *wherein local communities determine whether or not to include a content or skill area in the curriculum and whether to designate the offering as a required or an elective.*

The judgments of the Task Force regarding elementary curriculum, based upon the categories presented above, were:

Required
Art
Health
Language Arts
- *Handwriting*
- *Listening*
- *Speaking*
- *Spelling*
- *Usage (grammar, capitalization, punctuation)*
- *Writing (composition)*

Mathematics
Music (general)
Physical Education
Reading
Science
Social Studies
- *Geography*
- *History*

Local Option
Foreign Language
Instrumental Music
Native Culture
Native Language

Kindergarten was regarded by the Task Force as a program to be offered by all elementary schools, with attendance being optional.

Ethnic studies were viewed by the Task Force as an important component of elementary curriculum that should be integrated into all content areas.

Grades Seven and Eight

The Task Force utilized the same categories of Required and Local Option in considering offerings for grades seven and eight. Offerings were assigned to the categories as follows:

Required
Health
Language Arts
- *Composition*
- *Literature*
- *Speech*

Mathematics
Physical Education
Reading
Science
Social Studies
- *Geography*
- *Government*
- *History*

Local Option
Art
Foreign Language
Industrial Arts (woods, metals, et cetera)
Home Economics or Home Science (foods, clothing, et cetera)
Music
- *Instrumental*
- *Vocal*

Native Culture
Native Language

Ethnic studies were viewed as a content area that should be integrated into all aspects of the curriculum for grades seven and eight.

Secondary — Grades Nine through Twelve

Offerings for grades nine through twelve were also considered by the Task Force, again using the categories of Required and Local Option, plus a third category entitled Elective. The Elective category would include those course offerings available to all students in all schools unless local circumstances such as lack of space or limited enrollment preclude their being offered.

The judgments of the Task Force regarding offerings for grades nine through twelve were:

Required
Health
Language Arts
- *Composition*
- *Literature*
- *Speech*

Mathematics (General)
Physical Education
Science (General)
Social Studies
- *U.S. History*
- *U.S. Government*
- *Alaska History*
- *Alaska Government*
- *World History*

Electives
Art
Business Education (typing, law, bookkeeping, data processing, office machines, shorthand, personal finance)
Drama
Foreign Language
Home Economics or Home Science (foods and nutrition, family relations, clothing and textiles, child development)
Human Relations
Industrial Arts (woods, metals, small engines, transportation)
Language Arts (creative writing, developmental reading, journalism)
Mathematics (consumer, algebra, geometry, computer science, advanced algebra, trigonometry, mathematics analysis, probability and statistics, analytical geometry, calculus)
Music (instrumental, vocal)
Reading (developmental)
Science (earth, physical, biology, chemistry, physics, geology)
Social Studies (Native history, economics, anthropology, ethnic studies, psychology, sociology, contemporary problems, international relations)

Local Option
Driver Education
Native Culture
Native Language
Native Literature

Secondary electives have been presented under broad headings — i.e., industrial arts, music, et cetera. Local circumstances such as enrollment, facilities, the local economy, continued staff expertise, local interest, and (in some instances) the availability of computer software will determine the range of offerings in each broad area. Also, students taking electives in mathematics and science would likely satisfy requirements for general mathematics and general science, respectively.

Effective schooling practices are ways to make schools better places for students to learn. They are procedures, approaches and attitudes which focus the entire school on helping students reach high levels of achievement.

Research shows that certain schooling practices are more effective than others because they help teachers and administrators provide better instruction—and they help students learn. A school environment conducive to learning, a clearly defined curriculum, focused classroom instruction and management, ongoing assessment and evaluation of students and programs and strong instructional leadership all help make schools effective.

While research on effective schooling spans all grade levels, most content areas and schools of varying size, a preponderance of the studies reviewed in the preparation of this document were conducted at the elementary level in urban settings with a focus on basic skills instruction. The findings reported here are applicable with most confidence in similar contexts. However, research conducted in other contexts resulted in similar findings, which increases confidence that the practices identified here can be generalized. With cautious interpretation, these findings offer a firm foundation for reaching achievement and social behavior goals in schools.

The effective schooling practices listed in the following pages have been identified for use as part of a statewide effort to improve Alaska's schools. These lists are not intended for use as an evaluation instrument. They were compiled through a survey of educational research by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory in Portland, Oregon, under contract to the Alaska State Department of Education.

The practices listed here are dynamic and inter-related; instituting a single practice will probably not result in high student achievement. It is the presence of a number of mutually-supporting practices that causes and sustains effectiveness. They provide a common focus for improving education in Alaska.

1. *LEADERSHIP: Fueling the fire and fanning the flame*

A school with good leaders is bound to improve. Good leaders introduce ideas, get people involved, make decisions and keep everybody working until the job is done. Once the goals are set, school improvement takes time—and with good leadership keeping the school on target, every good school can get better.

1.1 What the school needs

- By consulting teachers, parents, students and other community members, leaders collect opinions about what students should learn and what teachers should teach.

- Leaders study schooling trends to compare local schooling with what's going on statewide or in other parts of the country.
- Student achievement data are analyzed to find out student strengths and weaknesses.
- All information is compiled, reported and used as the basis for choosing and initiating effective schooling practices that meet local needs.

1.2 What's working already

- Leaders find out what effective practices are already at work in the school by systematically collecting and analyzing data and through investigating staff concerns.
- Community perceptions of the school are assessed to be sure that public opinion is not reducing school effectiveness.

1.3 Overall school **status quo**

- Leaders prepare and present a full report of what's happening in the school to staff, board, students, parents and the rest of the community.
- The report spells out how well the school is doing and how it can improve: identified needs, current practices, areas for change and effective practices that can make the school better.
- Reporting the school *status quo* can increase awareness of and support for school improvement efforts in all segments of the community.

1.4 Goals for change

- Leaders develop priority goals for both what should be changed and how changes should be made. Goals are based on synthesis of data and opinions from staff, advisory groups, students and community members.
- Priority goals are reported to all members of the community.

1.5 A plan for improvement

- Leaders research alternative ways to put effective practices to work. They look at various approaches, decide how to judge their local usefulness, and involve staff, community members and even students in developing recommendations for a plan of action.
- After reviewing recommendations, a plan is adopted. Leaders then work to gain district support and approval for the approach and to make sure everyone knows about the selected school improvement plan.

1.6 Getting the staff ready

- Leaders work with staff to plan ways to prepare for improving the school. They define what the staff needs to know to implement effective practices, find out how much the staff already knows, and arrange necessary staff development activities.

1.7 Lining up resources

- Leaders list resources needed for school improvements, get whatever approvals are necessary, allocate local budget funds and insure that the school acquires what it needs.

1.8 Keeping the school on target

- Leaders monitor and evaluate improvement changes according to criteria established with staff cooperation and approval. They periodically make suggestions for refinements, prepare progress reports and report at year's end about how goals have been met.
- Leaders work to coordinate staff improvement efforts and continue keeping track of student achievement data to assess progress toward goals.

1.9 Fine tuning

- Leaders keep working to make sure changes are smooth and that selected effective practices are maintained. Either once a year or every other year, they head up renewal efforts to keep improvements in tune with changing local needs.

2. SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT: We're all in this together

In effective schools, everybody works together to get the job of learning done. Students, staff and parents all take part. Expectations and goals are clear, motivation is high, school time is used for learning, and high achievement is rewarded. Learning takes teamwork. In effective schools, everybody counts.

2.1 Students are expected to learn

- Administrators and teachers have high expectations for student achievement.
- Expectations are clearly defined.
- General expectations are not reduced for any student: students are expected to work toward priority goals.
- Everyone accepts that school is a place for learning.

2.2 Students are expected to behave

- A written code of conduct specifies acceptable student behavior.
- Students, staff and parents are familiar with the local code.
- The code outlines criteria and consequences for unacceptable behavior, covering discipline, tardiness and absenteeism.
- The conduct code is regularly reviewed by students and staff.
- There are written routine procedures for using the code.
- Disciplinary action quickly follows infractions and is consistent with the code.

- Discipline is administered in a neutral, matter-of-fact way; and the disciplinarian focuses on the student's behavior, not on personality.
- Students are told why they are being disciplined, in terms of the code of conduct.
- Out-of-school suspensions or expulsions are minimal: in-school suspension is used in most cases.
- Follow-up and action for absenteeism and tardiness occur within one school day.

2.3 ***There are expectations for staff***

- The staff believes that they can help all students reach high levels of achievement.
- Staff members are expected to meet specific standards and there is a systematic evaluation process.
- Teacher effectiveness concepts are used to develop criteria for teaching excellence.

2.4 ***Everyone knows that time is used for learning***

- Disruptions are reduced to assure school time is primarily used for learning.
- Building priorities, established collaboratively or by directive, emphasize use of time for learning and allocate time in accordance with district and building objectives.
- Everyone understands time priorities, school communications highlight the importance of time for learning, and there are procedures to maximize learning time.
- The school year calendar is organized to maximize learning time. Prior to adoption, new programs and procedures are evaluated according to their potential impact on learning time.
- During the school day, unassigned time and time spent on non-instructional activities are minimal. School events are scheduled to avoid disruption of learning time.
- The school day, classes and other activities start and end on time.
- Standard procedures, known to students, parents and teachers, are used for messages to avoid interruptions during class periods.
- Students are not pulled out of class: pullouts for non-academic activities (sports, counseling, etc.) routinely do not exceed one student per teacher per day; academic pullouts from regular classes are held to a minimum. Pullouts are monitored by administrators.
- There are procedures for providing extra help after school hours to students who need it.

2.5 There are incentives and recognition for students and teachers

- Students are recognized for academic achievement and for excellence in behavior.
- Student incentives and recognition are appropriate to student developmental levels and are consistently applied through explicit, objective procedures. All students have opportunities to work for recognition, which is chosen because it appeals to recipients.
- Teachers are recognized for excellence in teaching.
- All staff have the opportunity to work for recognition, according to explicit standards.
- Teacher recognition is linked to student achievement.
- At least some students and teachers are recognized publicly. Recognition may be immediate, or sometimes delayed.

2.6 Parents are involved

- Parents know their responsibilities for helping students learn.
- There are building standards and procedures for involving parents and all parents are made aware of them.
- Parents have various options for becoming involved in schooling.
- Staff members provide parents with information and techniques for helping students learn (training sessions, handbooks, meetings, etc.).

3. CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION AND MANAGEMENT: *Teachers make a difference*

Students spend most school time in classrooms with teachers. Teachers set standards, organize lessons and establish routines: they get students ready for what they're expected to learn and help them learn it. When it comes to effectiveness in the classroom, what teachers do really makes a difference.

3.1 Standards for how students behave

- Teachers let students know that there are high standards for behavior in the classroom.
- Standards are written, taught and reviewed from the beginning of the year.
- Students know that they are all expected to meet standards and clearly understand procedures and rules of behavior. They also believe they can meet those standards.

3.2 Clear routines and procedures	• Class starts quickly and purposefully, and teachers have assignments or activities ready for students when they arrive. Materials and supplies are ready, too. • Students make sure they bring materials they need to class each day. They use readily available storage space as needed. • Teachers handle administrative matters in quick, efficient routines and keep class interruptions at a minimum.
3.3 Managing student behavior	• Classroom rules are consistent with or identical to the building code of conduct and are appropriate to student developmental levels. • There are set procedures for discipline which are applied consistently. • Teachers stop disruptions quickly, taking care to avoid disrupting the whole class. • Students who break rules are warned only once; the second time the student is disciplined according to procedures. Discipline takes place quickly and is clearly linked to the student's inappropriate behavior. • In disciplinary action, the teacher focuses on the student's behavior, not on personality.
3.4 Standards for learning	• Teachers set high standards for learning and let students know they are all expected to meet them. • Students know what they are expected to learn and that they must meet basic objectives and classroom standards of quality.
3.5 Placement and grouping	• Whole-group instruction is preferable, but smaller groups are formed when needed to make sure all students learn thoroughly. • Groups are heterogeneous, and students are placed according to individual achievement levels. Teachers avoid underplacement of students. • Teachers review and adjust groups often, moving students when achievement levels change.
3.6 Stage setting	• Teachers help students get ready to learn. They spell out objectives in simple, everyday language and repeat them often. Teachers may post objectives in the classroom, and they regularly check to be sure students understand them. • Students understand objectives and are challenged to learn, particularly at the start of a difficult lesson. They know in advance what's expected and are ready to learn it.

3.7 Instruction and direction

- Teachers give students background information and clear written and verbal directions, letting them know that materials and lessons will help them reach learning objectives.
- Students who succeed at learning learn more, so teachers select academic tasks that assure a high rate of success. Students have plenty of opportunity for both guided and independent practice.
- During lessons, teachers ask clear, concrete, simple questions and make sure all students have a chance to respond.
- Teachers assign homework students can successfully complete. Directions are clear, and students write them down to avoid forgetting them. Teachers check homework and give students feedback.
- Parents help keep students involved in learning. Teachers let parents know that homework is important, give them tips on how to help students keep working, and let them know how students are doing. Parents keep track of student progress and help them follow through on homework.

3.8 Time for learning

- Teachers follow a system of priorities for using class time and allocate time for each subject or lesson. They concentrate on using class time for learning and spend very little time on non-learning activities.
- Teachers set and maintain a productive pace for instruction. New objectives are introduced quickly, and teachers give students clear time frames to accomplish tasks.
- Students are encouraged to pace themselves, using the clock to time themselves as they complete lessons. If they don't finish during class, they work on lessons after school, during lunch or in other time so they keep up with what's going on in class.

3.9 Review and reteaching

- Teachers quickly introduce new material at the beginning of the year, semester or quarter, with a minimum review or reteaching of previous lessons.
- Teachers reteach lesson content until students show they've learned it.
- Teachers use regular reviews of key concepts and skills throughout the year to check on student retention.

3.10 Interacting with students

- Teachers pay attention to student interests, problems and accomplishments in social interaction both in and out of the classroom.
- Teachers make sure they let students know they really care.

3.11 Recognizing students

- Teachers set up systems for frequent and consistent recognition of students for academic achievement and excellent behavior. Systems are appropriate to the developmental level of students, and excellence is defined by objective standards, not by peer comparison.
- All students know about recognition and what they need to do to get it.
- Recognition is made in terms of specific student achievement. At least some is public (display of student work); some but not all may be immediate.
- Parents are told about student successes and they encourage students to keep working toward rewards.

4. CURRICULUM: Blueprint for learning

The curriculum is a blueprint for learning—a clear picture of what students are expected to learn and how teachers can help them learn it. With a strong curriculum, a school has the goals, the process and the resources that can help students learn better and make it easier for teachers to teach.

4.1 What students are expected to learn

- Instructional planning is consistent at the district, school and classroom levels. A limited number of priority objectives make it clear what students are expected to learn.
- At the district level, objectives are specified and sequenced by grade level; reviewed for technical quality, specificity and clarity; targeted for students according to development level and what they are expected to learn. Objectives are selected to represent a range of learnings and are teachable within an established timeframe.
- At the building level, written objectives match school priorities and district guidelines, suit student needs and are prioritized within the school. Staff, students and the community know about the priorities.
- At the classroom level, objectives are developed and prioritized according to district and building guidelines; selected or approved by teachers; sequenced to facilitate student learning; and organized or grouped into units and lessons. Unit objectives are set in a timeline so teachers can use the calendar for instructional planning.

4.2 Resources to help them learn it

- Learning materials, physical space, special facilities, support staff and other instructional resources are identified and catalogued to support objectives.
- At the district level, resources are matched to objectives, include alternative media (textbooks, speakers, audio-visual aids), are checked for accuracy and are matched to student developmental levels.
- At the building level, resources are readily available, matched to objectives and used in accordance with district guidelines. Non-district resources (businesses, consultants) are identified so that they match student development and are verified for accuracy.
- In the classroom, resources match objectives being taught and the developmental level of students, and they are selected to reflect district and school guidelines. Resources are sufficient for all students as they need them, are clearly identified in unit and lesson plans and include alternatives that have been reviewed for content and appropriateness.

4.3 Approaches that help teachers teach

- At district, building and classroom levels, a variety of instructional strategies and techniques are identified for each priority objective and are integrated among levels for consistency in the teaching of objectives.
- Instructional strategies and techniques are appropriate for the developmental level of students, effective in helping students achieve objectives and include alternative approaches for teaching each objective.
- In the classroom, strategies and techniques are described in unit and lesson plans. Student responses required in lessons are the same as those required by the lesson objectives and/or assessment items. Students are allowed and encouraged to demonstrate responsibility and self-reliance.

5. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION: Knowledge is power

Schools that measure how they're doing always know how to keep getting better. Regular assessment and evaluation of students, programs and staff tell schools whether they are meeting their goals—and whether the goals need to change. Once improvement begins, the more the school knows, the stronger and more effective it can get.

5.1 Planning for student assessment

- Regular assessment of students and evaluation of results at the district, building and classroom levels monitor student progress. Assessment methods and instruments are selected to measure learning objectives at each level.

- Measurement is coordinated: district-level planning sets up district-wide measurement, and building and classroom level planning reflect district actions.
- Coordinated planning results in integrated assessment and evaluation and eliminates duplication of efforts.

5.2 *Finding out how they're doing and letting them know*

- Student assessment is planned, regular, routine and causes minimal disruption of classroom instruction.
- Testing results are reported in terms of learning objectives.
- At the district level, clearly stated assessment procedures are carried out by district staff. Major tests are announced well in advance to allow time for building and classroom scheduling. There are specific routines for scoring, storing, reporting and analyzing results.
- At the building level, staff follow simple routine procedures for frequent collection, summarization and reporting of student achievement information. Individual student records are maintained about achievement, discipline and tardiness.
- At the classroom level, teachers frequently monitor student learning, both formally and informally. Teachers know and use test development techniques to design valid, reliable assessment instruments. Assessment is routinely handled and students hear results. Reports of results to students are simple and clear to help them understand and correct errors; and reports are tied to learning objectives.

5.3 *Taking advantage of new information*

- District, building and classroom assessment results are used to evaluate programs and target areas for improvements.
- District and building level summaries of results are regularly reported to all staff and the community.
- At the building level, results are compared with targets for progress and discrepancies, are shared with staff.
- Classroom teachers use results to find out if instructional methods are working.

5.4 *Managing professional growth*

- Written procedures for staff supervision and evaluation at the building level help teachers set and work toward professional growth objectives.
- All staff are evaluated annually according to building criteria based on teacher effectiveness concepts and practices. Resources are made available to help teachers reach professional growth objectives.

- Classroom observations are made according to an agreed upon, regular schedule to collect consistent information about teacher performance. Observations include monitoring the consistent application of the building code of conduct.
- Teachers hear results of observations quickly, and staff is encouraged to discuss problems and concerns about school effectiveness. Building administrators establish troubleshooting routines for quick resolution of staff concerns.

Elements of Effective Schooling

Leadership

Identifying School Needs

Determining Implementation Level of Effective Schooling Practices

Developing Status Report

Defining Improvement Goals

Planning Improvement Approach

Preparing Staff for Improvement Implementation

Securing Resources to Support Improvements

Monitoring and Evaluating Implementation of Improvements

Renewing Improvement Efforts Annually or Biennially

School Environment

Expectations for Student Learning

Expectations for Student Social Behavior

Expectations for Staff

Use of Time

Recognition and Incentives

Parent Involvement

Curriculum

Learning Objectives

Resources

Instructional Strategies and Techniques

Classroom Instruction and Management

Expectations for Behavior

Classroom Routines and Procedures

Managing Student Behavior

Expectations for Learning

Placement and Grouping

Stage Setting

Instruction and Direction

Use of Time

Review and Reteaching

Student/Teacher Interactions

Incentives and Recognition for Student Achievement and Behaviors

Assessment and Evaluation

Alignment

Procedures

Uses of Assessment Data

Monitoring Staff Performance.

From experience and broad-based research and theory, Alaskans have identified the following primary and indirect conditions which can make school improvement possible. Primary conditions are those which have a direct impact upon the day-to-day learning of students. Indirect conditions are those which affect learning in a broad sense, but over which the schools have either limited control or no control.

Primary Conditions

1. There is a *warm, acceptant climate* in the school and the classroom in which students are valued and respected.
2. Students are regarded as being *able to achieve* and to learn, and they receive *positive encouragement* to do so. Each student is challenged and expected to develop to the fullest of his or her capacity.
3. *Feedback* to students is prompt as a means of reinforcing desired behaviors and as a means of minimizing student errors. The student is rewarded for good behavior, serious classroom effort, and achievement.
4. *Skills* learned in one subject are applied in other subject areas. Spelling, for example, is incorporated into other work; mathematics is used in science.
5. Formal *parent-teacher conferences* are scheduled, and sufficient time is provided for the conferences.
6. There is a *minimum of student waiting time* between the completion of one task and the beginning of the next.
7. Understanding and *respect for various cultures* are demonstrated by students and educators.
8. Instruction contains a strong emphasis on *applying knowledge to real life problems.*
9. The *content of instruction is well defined* and balanced on a grade by grade or year by year basis.
10. Instruction is based upon information in the *student record system,* which contains complete records identifying portions of the curriculum which each student has mastered.
11. There is a positive system of *staff evaluation* in which it is assumed that teachers are proficient when employed and that even the best teacher can improve. Emphasis is upon continuous professional growth and improvement of instruction.
12. *Staff inservice training* is directly related to assisting teachers and other staff in providing for effective schooling.
13. The school staff makes a determined effort to *communicate effectively* with parents or guardians and utilizes parent and community resources in the instructional program.
14. Strengths and weaknesses of the school are determined and *reported to the community.*
15. *Facilities and staff* are provided which *support the curriculum and school programs.*
16. Instruction is *well-managed* and school resources are effectively and efficiently administered.
17. *Discipline* is maintained and students are expected to assume responsibility for their own behavior. Disruptive student behavior is approached from the perspective of changing the behavior so that the student can stay in the school if possible.
18. *District policies* are supportive of effective schooling.

Indirect Conditions

1. *Citizens regard schooling as being important and effective.*
2. Appropriate *research and assessment* instruments are available for evaluating the effectiveness of schooling.
3. There are *teacher training* programs which provide talented and effective teachers.
4. Adequate *funding* is provided to meet both general operating and capital needs.
5. State Board of Education *policies and regulations,* as well as Department of Education practices, are supportive of effective schooling.
6. Students are reasonably *healthy and have adequate nutrition.*
7. Students see themselves as being *loved and accepted* by parents or guardians, peers and significant others apart from school.
8. The *parents or guardians* of students encourage *daily study and daily attendance.*
9. *Teachers and other staff* are afforded the needed amenities, including *housing,* that enable them to provide effective instruction.

As the statewide school improvement efforts continue in Alaska, more practices will be added and defined, and more specific conditions will emerge. The research base is ever expanding, the improvement process spreading, so that Alaska can be counted among those states whose commitment to effective schooling is outstanding.

Not to be used after 5/31/84

Extracts from Alaska's Small Rural High Schools: Are They Working? by J. S. Kleinfeld, G. W. McDiarmid, and D. Hagstrom, Institute for Social and Economic Research, Anchorage, 1985.

---

1. Most rural communities and rural educators see significant advantages, as well as some disadvantages to small rural high schools.

2. Despite the problems, most people we interviewed want small high schools to remain the backbone of the rural secondary school system, [but they] want a boarding option as an alternative.

3. Certain rural students [those with family or social problems, those academically gifted, and those wanting broader experiences] need an alternative; some families make private arrangements.

4. The most dramatic educational benefit of small local high schools is the increase in the number of rural students who graduate...The drop-out rate...has now fallen to half the national average.

5. ...the most effective ways to raise achievement test scores -- teacher-directed tutorials, peer tutoring, and computer-assisted instruction -- are common educational methods in small high schools.

6. The size of the high school does not determine the quality of the student's educational experience. Other school characteristics are far more important. [See Attachment A]

7. Most rural high school students score far below the national average on standardized tests [see Attachment B] ...Rural students also scored very poorly...when they went away to boarding schools.

8. A number of factors ... combine to keep the achievement test scores ...low: language background, urban context of many test items, and social traditions that do not emphasize academic skills.

9. Of [the rural students] we surveyed, close to 70 percent said that they wanted more schooling, and over half of those wanted to attend a four-year college program. [Attachment C]

10. Those most dissatisfied with the small high schools are rural college students who find that their secondary education is inadequate preparation for college.

11. At the University of Alaska at Fairbanks...63 percent of entering rural freshmen did not return for their sophomore year [whether from small schools or large].

12. Rural educators agree [with community people and school board presidents]. They also favor small schools and a boarding option. In their view, small high schools can provide a high quality education. Many are in fact doing it.

---------- Comments ----------

a. The authors defined a small high school as one enrolling fewer than 100 student in grades 9 - 12 located in a community of fewer than 1,000 residents. In 1984, about 3,700 students attended 162 such schools, about three-fourths of which are in predominantly Native villages.

b. In conducting their study, the authors collected test scores, made site visits, and used mail-out surveys and telephone interviews.

c. I need to point out that I think the authors are more sanguine about the prospects of carrying out effective educational programs in the small schools than my extracts suggest. They not only testify that some schools are working well, and tell why they are, but they suggest a variety of strategies and approaches that will help overcome the disadvantages of smallness and remoteness.

d. In Attachment A (and in number 6 above) the authors tell us that their research supports what most of us know: some schools are better than others. In urban areas, however, such a distinction is typically attributed to the income and eduation levels of the surrounding neighborhood. What is important in the conclusion of these researchers is that even when school populations are similar, some schools are better than others. The unabridged edition of this study contains narrative portrayals of six schools and how and why they are different.

e. Although technology is often urged as a means of extending the curriculum in rural areas, the researchers found little use of instructional television or audioconferencing. Microcomputers were in use, but usually for" word-processing or drill, rather than as a means to deliver coursework without an on-site instructor." The situation with regard to the use of computers may be changing, given the enlargement of choices of educational software over the past four years.

Bob Arnold 7/28/88

ATTACHMENT A

Finding 4: The size of the high school *does not* determine the quality of the student's educational experience. Other school characteristics are far more important.

Our fieldwork showed that some very small schools, even those with fewer than ten students, provide a high quality education, while some much larger schools, those with 40 to 100 students, do not.

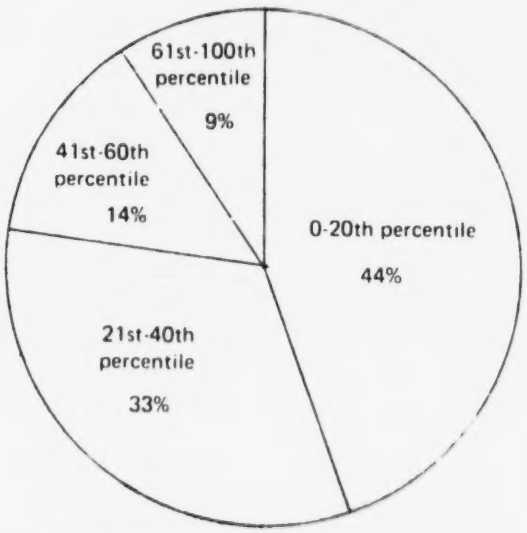
Achievement test scores tell the same story. The larger rural high schools, enrolling 40 to 100 students, show a distribution of test scores no different from those serving smaller numbers of students.

It is not size but other conditions that distinguish the small high schools that are working from those that are in trouble. In small high schools that are working well:

1. **The community and school have forged an educational partnership and support each other.**
2. **The school has developed some clear focus that unifies and gives purpose to the educational program. This focus (or theme) might be language development, college preparation, cultural maintenance, or leadership development.**
3. **The school staff consists of enterprising educators who are not hide-bound to a single image of what a high school looks like and who can design a program fitted to a particular situation.**
4. **The school staff has the broad intellectual range and broad interests (such as dog mushing, taxidermy, writing, art, music, house building, flying a plane) that add variation to the program.**
5. **The school is in a district where the central office administrators encourage local professionals to consult with the community and to fit the instructional program to community priorities.**

ATTACHMENT B

Percentage of Entire 9th-12th Grades
at Different Percentile Rankings*



Total Number of Grades Represented: 522

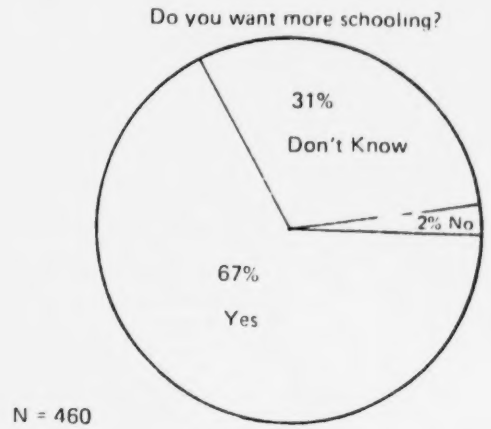
*Please keep in mind that these figures represent average achievement test scores for the whole grade, not scores for individual students.

Source: ISER Small High School Study, 1984.

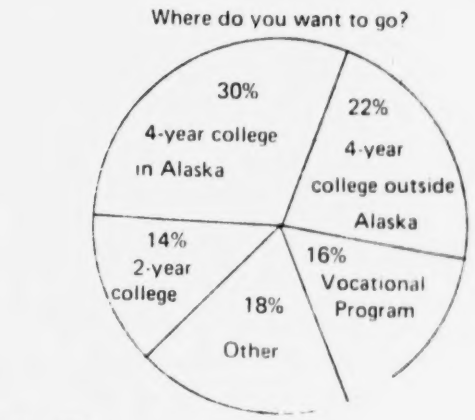
Figure 9

Students in Rural High Schools Have Low Achievement Test Scores

ATTACHMENT C



N = 460



N = 307

Source: ISER Small High School Study, 1984.

Figure 11

Most Small High School Students Want More Schooling After High School

Summary and extracts from "Thoughts on Drop-out Prevention: A Collection of Essays by Alaskan Seniors," Alaska Department of Education, Juneau, June 1988, 23 pages.

1. Twenty-nine seniors from twenty communities across the state who applied for the Byrd scholarship wrote these essays. The quality of the essays is very high, suggesting that the schools the writers attended have been places of learning for them. But what they say about their schools is often not complimentary; it is sometimes harshly critical.

2. As the attached extracts show, only a small number blamed their fellow students for dropping out. They said students need to care about education, to learn responsibility, and to end their delinquent behavior. Two attributed the drop-out problem to pregnancy or the need for a job, and another pointed to emotional or learning problems as causes. Many of the writers said or implied that school experiences lead persons to drop out.

3. These critics called upon teachers to help prevent drop-outs by being caring, interesting, and encouraging, by offering words of kindness, rewarding even small successes, helping instill confidence and a sense of self-worth in their students. One observed that these kinds of attitudes and actions are afforded to good students, but rarely to poorer students.

4. In addition to calling for these kinds of changes on the part of teachers, these seniors had various other recommendations about what a school could do about drop-outs: peer tutoring ("it works"), alternative programs ("but they carry a bad name"), more social activities (with good grades required for participation), psychology/behavior classes, a non-college prep track, and student participation in shaping a school's program.

5. One writer explained that he had little experience with the issue of drop-outs. In the village where he lives, he said, "school is the most exciting thing going on."

---------- Comments ----------

a. In the attached extracts I have sought to select the reason given or implied by each writer for students dropping out.

b. It seems to me that many of these seniors are saying that schools experiences contribute to putting high schoolers "at risk," and changes in the schooling experience can reduce the number of persons "at risk."

Extracts from the seniors' essays

* If a student is not good at memorizing facts, he will not do well in school. Worst of all, the constant frustration and boredom can be lethal to a student's school career.

* Create an educational system that means something to students and I will show you a zero drop-out rate.

* Many problems stem from the home environment, such as child abuse, neglect, incest, and lack of parental guidance.

* With the guidance of numerous exceptional teachers during the next eight years I've found school interesting and challenging. I believe that with positive early school experiences many of those that dropped out would have finished school.

* The fourth and final alternative [for potential drop-outs] is simply more understanding on the part of the teachers and administrators toward each student's special needs.

* Everyone needs to be affirmed, and I think our schools are losing many students just because they are made to feel insignificant to the system.

* If all the negative connotations could be removed from the school and replaced with a supportive atmosphere, we would find far fewer students willing to drop out...I am now graduating from that kind of school.

* If more support from family, friend and teachers was offered throughout the school years, students might be encouraged to stay in school longer.

* ...class sizes should be smaller...Besides giving individual attention, more specifically, teachers could help develop a feeling of pride in something he or she is good at.

* [Like my best teachers] every teacher needs to give their students, classes, and lessons direction....teaching needs to be motivating, exciting and interesting....equally important is the supportive nature of a teacher.

* Kids drop out of school because they feel it is not interesting or pertinent enough for them to sit there and receive no positive recognition.

* Another way to keep students from dropping out of school is to keep encouraging them and giving them positive attention for doing well in school.

* [A potential drop-out complained to a peer tutor that school was boring.] This was perhaps the most difficult statement with which to deal and one of the main causes for students to drop out. The best answer we could provide was that although school may be boring, it is something that everyone must do.

* It turns out that most of the student drop-outs had conflicts with their teacher or were disappointed with their school system. They believed that school was a waste of time. [At my last school] the teachers weren't enthusiastic about teaching and didn't support or encourage the students to learn.

* First of all, you need a closeness between the students and faculty that is like that of a father and a son....Enthusiasm and excitement of each teacher is a must to keep student morale up...Another important thing would be to vary the learning process a little....promote student spirit....

* It is important for students to know that their teachers care about them and that they are there to help.

* If encouragement and praise cannot be found in the home, then the school must provide these vital elements....If a teacher expects work to be done and knowledge to be learned, the students will react in a positive way.

* Many considered high school to be a waste of time and impractical. "Why should we spend time learning Shakespeare if we aren't going to college?" was often asked.

*...students must be taught responsibility. Students need to feel like they're accomplishing something by being in school.

* Teachers need to make the kids feel confident about themselves and give them some self-worth....When a teenager sees that people other than his parents are concerned about what he does and his future, he will also contemplate what he wants to do with his life.

* The majority of students who drop out of school do so because they are unsatisfied with their school experience. The school system operates to educate the "average" student, and...students who do not learn well under these programs are branded inferior and are alienated from their peers.

* One way to encourage students to remain in school is to make the classroom a place of fulfillment, not a place of confrontation.... If school systems expect to keep what they have classified as "poor" students in the classroom, they must adjust the programs to make these students feel more successful and proud of their accomplishments instead of constantly criticizing them.

* [Not all students can have wonderful parents so] Teachers need to focus on the positive strengths in a student....Even the weakest student knows something he can teach to a younger child, and when he realizes "he really can," his self-confidence will build....Students should not be treated as the product of the educational system, but rather as the consumer.

* There are many types of people who drop out. These types of students range from those who are bored, to those who are confused, or who are influenced by peer pressure.

* High school drop-outs are portrayed as lazy and shiftless, but this is rarely the case, for dropouts often face problems which hinder their ability to learn....Recognition is given to good students, but students who raise their grades from failing or below average to average or above average should also receive attention and praise for their achievements.

* In junior high school everyting changed....Often times help was unavailable because my teachers had "better things to do." Incorrect work was labeled only as failing, giving me no chance to learn from my errors....High school needs to become a place where students learn because of the faculty, not in spite of them.

* There should be no losers in the game of education!

Extracts from Who Reads Best? Factors Related to Reading Achievement in Grades 3, 7, and 11, Educational Testing Service, February 1988, 60 pages.

1. This report is based on NAEP's 1986 national assessment of the reading achievement of [36,000] American schoolchildren. [It] involved nationally representative samples of students in grades 3, 7, and 11 attending public and private schools...

2. The most distresssing aspect of these results is the relatively poor performance of students from at-risk minority groups and from disadvantaged urban communities....the difference in performance levels between the better and poorer readers remains relatively constant at each grade level.

3. To help students become critical readers, effective instruction focuses on the comprehension process before, during, and after a reading experience.

4. As many as a quarter of the [third graders] claimed that their teachers never pointed out hard words, however, and 31 percent reported that their teacher never read new parts aloud. Nearly 40 percent reported never having received guiding questions to answer while they were reading.

5. More than 45 percent of the students at grades 7 and 11 reported never having the opportunity to exchange ideas in group discussion, which can be a powerful context for the development of higher level thinking skills.

6. ...better readers are taught more effective reading strategies, while poorer readers are likely to have their old, less-effective strategies reinforced.

7. ...while the nation's student have the skills to derive a surface understanding of what they read, they have difficulty when asked to defend or elaborate upon this surface understanding.

8. At both [grade levels 7 and 11], the greater the breadth of materials student reported reading, the higher the students' reading proficiency was likely to be.

9. In grades 7 and 11, 10 to 15 percent of the students reported that they were not assigned homework or did not do it, and these students had noticeably lower reading proficiency levels than did their classmates who reported regularly spending time on homework.

10. At grade 11, students who spent more than two hours per night on homework had the highest average reading proficiency; at grade 7, the highest averages were for students who spent 1 to 2 hours; while at grade 3, there was not a strong relationship ...

11. Students were asked to read [a] social studies passage, ["Goods to Market,"] and to make comparisons between what they had read and their own experiences....[It was] so difficult that 88 percent of the 11th graders were apparently unable to relate what they had read to their everyday experiences and make a simple comparison.

12. ...the more reading materials available in the home, the better the students' reading proficiency levels are likely to be.

----------Comments----------

a. The NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress) is such a widely-respected measure of achievement that the Council of Chief State School Officers says "the most exciting prospect" is that state-level achievement data will be available by 1990 or 1991 through a plan to expand the NAEP to produce state-level results.

b. As number 11 above tells, this assessment looked at writing as well as reading, as, of course, it should. Two closely related areas are listening and speaking, as UAA professor Marilyn Buckley told school superintendents today at their summer conference in Juneau. Nearly everywhere she looks, she said, she sees language arts classrooms in which pupils are filling in the blanks of worksheets -- punctuation, grammar, spelling; what they should be doing is reading (literature, not textbooks), writing, listening, and speaking.

Like John Goodlad, she sees too little talking as well as too little writing by learners, and those activities, she said, are "a means of making knowledge one's own." I agree.

Among other things, Professor Buckley declared that language arts reform efforts are being made in every state: "They aren't going to go away." More later.

c. Of the dozen superintendents replying so far to our questionnaire, two have cited initiatives aimed specifically at reading achievement improvement. The Annette Island REAA has adopted a time allocation schedule for elementary schools to emphasize reading, language arts, and math. The Dillingham city district has adopted a policy requiring students in grades 4-12 to take an additional class daily in reading if they are two grades below the norm as measured by the SRA.

d. Seventy-five percent of students in the Yukon-Koyukuk district participated in this year's "River Readers" program. From September through May, the 389 readers read 14,295 books! Many of them read over 100 books each, several read over 200, and one of them read 368 books during the school term.

Bob Arnold 8/3/88

Extracts from Time for Results: The Governor's 1991 Report on Education, National Governors' Association, 1986, 171 pages.

CHAIRMAN'S SUMMARY - Governor Lamar Alexander, Tennessee

1. American education has fallen into some deep ruts. Some of the changes that need to be made are so deep and will take so long that unless the governors push, small changes will be labeled reforms and nothing much will happen except spending more money.

2. Almost any governor will tell you that his or her state has "the finest new education reform program in America," most of them enacted since 1982.

3. Too many of us have spent too much time during the last few years battling with educators to secure real reforms. The battles were necessary. But they took time that could have been spent working with educators to develop even better strategies and even more support.

4. Here are some of the recommendations [from seven task forces] that attracted my attention:

- Now is the time to work out a fair, affordable Career Ladder salary system that recognizes real differences in function, competence, and performance of teachers.

- States should create leadership programs for school leaders.

- Parents should have more choice in the public schools their children attend.

- The nation -- and the states and school districts -- need better report cards about results, about what students know and can do.

- School districts and schools that don't make the grade should be declared bankrupt, taken over by the state, and reorganized.

- It makes no sense to keep closed half a year the school buildings in which America has invested a quarter of a trillion dollars while we are undereducated and overcrowded.

- States should work with four- and five-year-olds from poor families to help them get ready for school and to decrease the chances that they will drop out later.

- Better use of technologies through proper planning and training for use of videodiscs, computers, and robotics is an important way to give teachers more time to teach.

TASK FORCE ON TEACHING: Chairman's summary
Governor Thomas H. Kean, New Jersey

1. The public must offer teachers a professional work environment and all that goes with it...reasonable salaries and a real voice in decisions...the chance to design the standards that define professional performance and ways to assess that performance.

2. Teachers, for their part, must offer the public a commitment to the highest standards of professional competence....They must work for results, as I think most want to do, not work to the rule.

3. Governors must set the stage for this new compact...[They] should make it clear to teacher organizations, administrators, and school boards that they must devise a new way of doing business...[Such a compact] can only be achieved over time through discussion, experimentation, and with considerable forbearance on all sides.

4. Governors have to get the leaders in their states to review that national policy agenda [including a national board of professional standards for teachers, incentives to encourage more professional school environments, the rebuilding of teacher education]...They should listen to teachers, principals, and board members, and focus the energy of those people on what must be done.

TASK FORCE/PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND CHOICE: Chairman's summary
Governor Richard D. Lamm, Colorado

1. Key recommendations from our task force include:

- Expanding opportunities for students by adopting [laws to permit families to choose schools their children will attend] and permitting juniors and seniors to attend accredited postsecondary institutions with tax funds following the student;

- Encouraging and assisting school districts to develop more effective parent-involvement techniques; and

- Reminding parents that they can improve their children's achievement by working closely with the school.

TASK FORCE ON READINESS: Chairman's summary
Governor Richard D. Riley, South Carolina

1. States must develop initiatives to help at-risk preschool children become ready for school [such as in-home assistance for parents, private support for homes with absentee parents, high quality preschool and parenting programs, and improved programs in existing day care centers].

2. States must work to assure that at-risk children and youth meet the new educational standards from school entry through school graduation [by providing, for example, extra help in basic skills, incentives for teachers, challenging curriculum, accurate assessment of student performance, rewards for successful schools, alternative programs, incentives for reduced class size in the lower grades, and state intervention when schools are failing].

TASK FORCE ON TECHNOLOGY: Chairman's summary
Governor John H. Sununu, New Hampshire

1. Our major recommendations are:

- Support demonstrations...to document what is cost-effective and efficient at the school site;

- Support the creation of market mechanisms [to assure the availability of compatible hardware/software].

- Support and encourage all school districts to develop plans for for using technologies and provide training for teachers in the use of them.

TASK FORCE ON SCHOOL FACILITIES: Chairman's report
Governor Ted Schwinden, Montana

1. States should focus existing "community education" initiatives on the shared use of facilities. Particular attention should be given to community groups that provide day care and services to "latchkey children."

2. States should help school districts develop shared-use and year-round school calendars.

3. States should act to restore school buildings whose maintenance needs or safety improvements have been deferred.

TASK FORCE ON LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT: Chairman's summary
Governor Bill Clinton, Arkansas

1. We should begin a dialogue to determine broad goals for education and ways to reach these goals. The challenge is to:

- Match state-sponsored educational training and certification requirements to the skills principals need to be effective;

- Provide incentives and technical assistance to districts to promote school-site management and school renewal; and,

- Develop a system to evaluate principals accurately and to reward principals and schools for performing effectively.

---------- Comments ----------

a. To prepare this report, the NGA's staff arm worked with seven task forces which gathered information and held hearings around the country in 1985 and 1986. (The seventh task force addressed the issue of college accountability.) Since the report contains hundreds of recommendations, I selected the ones seen by the chairmen as the most important.

b. The report is called the "1991 report" because the NGA has determined to make the issue of school reform a five-year effort. Updates are to be issued each year.

c. Like some of the other summaries I have prepared, this one reminds us that the range of issues affecting the performance of schools is very wide, that there are many choices to be made by those who would effect school improvement, that major changes require broad consultation among those affected, and that major changes take time to effect.

d. Equally important as a message of this report, however, is that major changes <u>are</u> being made in most states in an effort to improve school performance, and that governors have concluded that further changes are required.

Bob Arnold 8/4/88

Extracts from "Empowering Minority Students: A Framework for Intervention," by Jim Cummins, in the Harvard Educational Review, February 1986, 19 pages.

---

1. When the patterns of minority student school failure are examined from an international perspective, it becomes evident that power and status relations between minority and majority groups exert a major influence on school performance. An example frequently given is the academic failure of Finnish students in Sweden, where they are a low-status group, compared to their success in Australia, where they are regarded as a high status group.

2. ... widespread school failure does not occur in minority groups that are positively oriented towards both their own and the dominant culture, that do not perceive themselves as inferior to the dominant group, and that are not alienated from their own cultural values.

3. Students who are empowered by their school experiences develop the ability, confidence, and motivation to succeed academically...Thus, student empowerment is regarded as both a mediating construct influencing academic performance and as an outcome variable itself.

4. ...the most successful bilingual programs appear to be those that emphasize and use the students' [home language]. Is this success due to better promotion of [home language cognitive/academic skills or to the reinforcement of cultural identity provided by an intensive [home language] program? [Both dimensions are properly incorporated within the notion of student empowerment.]

5. Considerable research data suggest that, for dominated minorities, the extent to which student' language and culture are incorporated into the school program constitutes a significant predictor of academic success.

6. When educators involve minority parents as partners in their children's education, parents appear to develop a sense of efficacy that communicates itself to children, with positive academic consequences.

7. ...the teacher's role in [school-community] relations can be characterized along a <u>collaborative-exclusionary</u> dimension [ranging from one of active encouragement of parental participation to one of viewing such participation as irrelevant or detrimental].

8. Several investigators have suggested that many "learning disabilities" are pedagogically induced in that children designated "at risk" frequently receive intensive instruction which confines them to a passive role and induces a form of "learned helplessness."

9. [What is needed is not the transmission pedagogical model which] focuses predominantly on surface feature of language or literacy such as handwriting, spelling, and decoding, and emphasizes correct recall of content taught by means of highly structured drills and workbook exercises.

10. [What is needed is the reciprocal interaction model whose central tenet is that "talking and writing are means to learning".] This model emphasizes the development of higher level cognitive skills rather than just factual recall, and meaningful language use by students rather than the correction of surface forms.

11. Ample opportunities for expressive writing appear to be particularly significant in promoting a sense of academic efficacy among minority students.

12. In some cases assessment itself may play the primary role [in legitimizing the disabling of minority students], but more often it has been used to locate the "problem" within the minority student, thereby screening from critical scrutiny the subtractive nature of the school program, the exclusionary orientation of teachers towards minority communities, and transmission models of teaching that inhibit students from active participation in learning.

13. An alternative role definition for psychologists or special educators [is to become] advocates for the child in analyzing critically the societal and educational context within which the child has developed.

14. I have proposed a theoretical framework...[and within it] the educational failure of minority students is analyzed as a function of the extent to which schools reflect or counteract the power relations that exist within the broader society.

15. ...language-minority students' educational progress in strongly influenced by the extent to which individual educators become advocates for the promotion of student's linguistic talents, actively encourage community participation in developing students' academic and cultural resources, and implement pedagogical approaches that succeed in liberating students from instructional dependence.

---------- Comments ----------

a. Although a "theoretical framework," Cummins' paper is founded in his own research and that of others. His argument and conclusions are buttressed for me by research conclusions about conditions and practices important in effective schooling generally -- parental engagement in the schooling process, student self-esteem, inter-active instuctional approaches, etc.

b. In support of his case for collaboration between parents and school, Cummins told of the Haringey project in Britain in which two classes of primary school children in multi-ethnic areas read to their parents at home regularly, two classes were afforded extra instruction in reading by a specialist, and a control group was used for comparison. The result: "Children who read to their parents made significantly greater progress in reading [and in interest in learning, behavior] than those who did not engage in this type of literacy sharing." Parents participated even when they were non-literate and largely non-English speaking. I wonder whether this "simple intervention" is being employed in Alaska, and if so, with what results.

c. Student-written community newspapers, pamphlets, and books can empower students and serve both language arts goals and community-school relations. What some districts are doing is described in what I think is a very useful publication, The Teacher as Inventor: Making Small High Schools Work, by J. Kleinfeld, G. W. McDiarmid, and W. Parrett, College of Human and Rural Development, University of Alaska, Fairbanks, 1986.

Bob Arnold 8/5/88

Information about student achievement in Anchorage from "Profile of Student Performance, 1986-87," Anchorage School District, 1987, 124 pages.

---

1. In the school year ending in 1987, the Anchorage district enrolled 45,253 students, about 44 percent of the 103,157 students enrolled in the public schools of Alaska.

2. Minority students made up 23 percent of the enrollment.

American Native	7.7 percent	Black	7.5 percent
Asian-Filipino	4.9 percent	Hispanic	2.7 percent

3. Composite scores on standardized achievement tests were in the following ranges over the several grade levels tested:

Caucasians	65th to 71st percentile
Asian-Filipino	53rd to 64th percentile
Hispanics	44th to 56th percentile
American Natives	42nd to 54th percentile
Blacks	38th to 49th percentile

4. There were variations in composite scores among schools in the district. The only secondary schools which were below the national averages at every grade level were the alternative schools targeted at students who were not succeeding in school; there were two elementary schools whose composite scores were below national averages at all grade levels. About two-thirds of the elementary schools met or exceeded the national average at all grade levels.

5. Lower scores were typically found in less affluent neighborhoods. Analysis showed that "socio-economic variables other than racial-ethnic group may be more related to achievement than the racial-ethnic background of students..."

6. "Asian/Filipino and white students are most likely to be in advanced classes and least likely to be in remedial classes among the racial-ethnic groups."

7. The dropout rate in the district is estimated to be about 15 percent. "Percentages ranged from thirteen to sixteen percent except for American Natives who dropped out at a twenty-eight percent rate over their high school career."

8. In 1987 alone, 851 of the 1,223 dropouts were white (2.70 percent), 217 were Natives (6.19 percent, 42 were Hispanic (3.45 percent), 78 were Black (2.30 percent), and 35 were Asian/Pacific Islanders (1.59 percent).

Bob Arnold 8/16/88

Extracts from The Forgotten Half: Non-college Youth in America, the William T. Grant Foundation Commission on Work, Family, and Citizenship, January 1988, 99 pages.

---

1. This report calls attention to...the approximately 20 million 16-24 year-olds who are not likely to embark upon undergraduate education... They, too, aspire to succeed, to find a niche in the workplace where they can make a living, raise a family, and earn respect in the community.

2. The Commission views with optimism the "school reform" movement of this decade... [The reports have stressed] the importance of having high standards for all students and spotlighted the need to elevate the teaching profession... But ours is a cautious optimism...

3. Many of the "school reform" reports have assumed that the schools have failed only to teach enough academic subjects and that students have failed to absorb enough academic material. The assumed solution is more of the same: more time in school by creating longer days or a longer school years, more academic courses required for graduation, and more standardization of these course. The Commission has serious reservations about such a blanket policy when applied to youth who learn in many different ways and who are already overly cloistered in school.

4. Many of these young people, referred to as "school-weary" by the Germans, do not do well in traditional schools either because they are not good in standard academic subjects as they have been traditionally taught or because they don't want to, or see no value in performing well. Many of these students are only barely scraping by -- and often dropping out -- not for lack of ability, but because school has no connection to anything of value in their lives or in their vision of the future.

5. We recommend that schools improve their ability to accommodate different learning styles by expanding the variety of instructional methods available to students and their teachers. [See attachment for a summary.]

6. We recommend that states establish their own special goals for raising achievement levels and for reducing total school dropout levels...to 10 percent or less by the year 2000.

7. The Commission also recommends that every state and community should establish concrete school completion goals, youth employment goals, parental involvement goals, and youth community service goals. These goals should be publicly announced and monitored in annual community-school" report cards," along with achievement scores, college admission results, and other measures of school effectiveness.

8. We strongly recommend that specific guidelines be developed by states and school districts to direct resources to those schools which fall seriously short of their completion goals, rather than abandoning them to their failure or, as some have suggested, closing them down altogether.

9. We recommend that the goal of vocational education be redirected away from specific job training to the more realistic and valuable goal of motivating students to acquire the skills and knowledge they need for both work and active citizenship.

10. ...the public must also understand that educational improvement cannot be managed well by any one institution acting in isolation. While schools have the primary responsibility for serving young people, to succeed they must have the active support of other institutions in the community.

----------Comments----------

a. Most of the preceding extracts are from the chapter entitled, "A Better First Chance: Improved Schooling," but the book's content is much broader. What I have selected is based upon general considerations of school performance.

b. Among other things, the authors call for full funding of Headstart and Chapter 1 (compensatory education) by the federal government, citing studies which testify to their merit. They urge expansion of work opportunities and performance of community service -- as part of the school experience -- to enhance student learning and social development. They also call for the use of school volunteers as tutors and expansion of information programs on careers.

c. The authors are also concerned with those who have already left school and call for expanded "added chance" opportunities in the Job Corps, state and local youth corps, basic skills remediation programs, the Job Training Partnership Act, and the Armed Forces. They point out that public subsidies for those attending college are much greater than for others.

d. As you will have noted, much of what is urged on behalf of the students not going on to college -- adopting principles of effective schooling, effective teaching, etc. -- is the same as is urged by school reformers generally. But to the extent that school reform means simply more hours, unaccompanied by other changes, they disagree.

Bob Arnold
8/17/88

Appendix B

On Effective Education and Remediation Programs For Youth

Practitioners and researchers generally agree on strategies for effective learning. Such strategies work for academic learning, youth employment training, or combinations of both. Much of what is known comes from careful assessments of effective school, employment training, and on-the-job training programs, not just from theoretical studies. The assessments show what works for youth in general as well as for at-risk youth. A brief summary of what research has found follows:

THE PROGRAM CONTEXT

- INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP. Effective leadership is a key element in successful education and training programs. The principal, project manager, or training director sets standards and expectations for teaching and learning for teachers and for learners. Successful, experienced teachers have a critical role in providing this instructional leadership.
- THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT. Discipline and order are essential. Effort and perseverance must be maintained among students and teachers in pursuit of educational goals. A significant aspect of developing order and discipline is awakening the interest of students through teaching methods that enlist their curiosity and participation.
- TARGETED PROGRAMS. Programs that direct services toward the most at-risk, rather than toward those whose needs are least, show the greatest cost-benefit ratios. Programs which focus on individual needs are much more effective than very general approaches which do not take such differences into account.
- LONGER TERM INTERVENTIONS. Lasting results take time to achieve. Research on Chapter 1 programs shows that gains made by children in enriched programs tended to fade when the intervention ceased. Some young people need extra help and follow-up support for a period of years.
- STABLE FUNDING. Programs for youth often suffer from the vagaries of the political and economic climate. Unstable funding keeps programs in turmoil so they do not have a chance to succeed. Programs for at-risk youth should be supported as part of ongoing educational programs with regular appropriations, rather than "soft" categorical funds that cannot be relied upon.

THE INSTRUCTIONAL CONTEXT

- FLEXIBLE PACING. Students should be able to learn material at a pace they can handle. In lock-step programs, slower youth become discouraged and the more able become bored.
- MULTIPLE TEACHING MODES. Students not only learn at different rates but in different ways. Effective teaching provides opportunities to learn by listening, reading, discussing, making, role-playing, writing, tutoring, and, above all, *participating*. Too much of most students' classroom time is spent in passive listening to teachers.
- COMPUTER-ASSISTED INSTRUCTION. Computers are one tool that can help to make individualized, self-paced learning effective but they are no substitute for a good teacher with a well-formed lesson plan. Computers can deliver instruction step-by-step, requiring mastery of one element of subject matter before the student can move to more complex matter. Computers can be programmed to provide instant feedback, encouragement, additional approaches to learning, and analyses of error.
- LEARNING FOR MASTERY. Traditional classroom instruction does not always ensure that students will master subject matter. Mastery or competency models of learning seek to ensure that each student understands the subject matter before tackling more difficult concepts.
- THE INSTRUCTOR'S CENTRAL ROLE. Competent and caring instructors provide young people with a rich learning experience. Such instructors are able both to engage students in

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

group learning experiences and to help them learn on their own. The instructor's expectations are also important. Students tend to do better work when teachers expect them to do well, and poorly when teachers expect them to fail.

- THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTICIPATION. Young people tend to learn best when they actively participate in learning experiences — by doing as well as by reading or listening. Isolated learning and lectures need to be leavened with cooperative projects, seminars, group discussions, performances, and field trips.
- YOUTH RESPONSIBILITY. To learn most effectively, young people need to be accountable for their learning goals, efforts, and results. They must be helped to learn basic study skills and then should be expected to assume responsibility for following through on assignments, spending enough time on each task, mastering the subject matter, and demonstrating competency. Such accountability increases the learner's sense of power, enhances self-esteem, and demonstrates an expectation and the reality of success, rather than failure.
- A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT. All youth need a structured, supportive environment in their everyday lives, but at-risk youth are frequently denied this necessity. If they are to learn effectively, some youth may need to be assured of child care for their children, or of the presence of an adult who cares. Also, they may require health services, adequate nutrition, transportation, and even income. These services require a high degree of cooperation among community youth agencies. Learning cannot occur when someone is worried about a child, or is hungry, ill, or neglected.
- THE IMPORTANCE OF SUCCESS. For many disadvantaged youth, a sense of repeated failure may have damaged their self-esteem, reduced their sense of power, and eroded their expectations for achievement. These young people need learning experiences that ensure them a high probability of success.
- LEARNING AND WORK. The capacity for learning remains an essential ingredient of effective youth programs. Without the ability to read, write, calculate, think, and cope with rapid change, youth are certain to wind up in dead-end jobs. Youth themselves need to understand this important connection between learning and employability. Increasingly, success in the workplace demands mastery of higher order skills. When young people learn to learn, they can move from job to job as their abilities, needs, and desires — and the imperatives of the work-place — dictate.
- THE HEART OF THE MATTER. All youth have a right to understand their heritage as human beings and Americans. Whether from poor families or rich, they need a sense of the people and achievements that have fashioned the world and their country. The core curriculum of the schools should include exposure to the multi-cultural traditions of this country and others. Basic learning skills are not enough; a core of substantive knowledge is essential.

THE COMMUNITY CONTEXT

- THE IMPORTANCE OF COLLABORATION. Programs for youth are most effective when there is collaboration with various community institutions: religious, civic, and business organizations, as well as the schools. Dropouts are recruited most effectively in their own neighborhoods by community-based organizations and staffs. Program-community links help to ensure program stability and coordination of services. Such linkages help give community leaders a stake in the success of the programs in terms of better-prepared, entry-level employees, reduced welfare costs, and more involved citizens.
- ASSURANCE OF MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT. Program-community collaboration can cement motivation by demonstrating the connection between learning and meaningful employment. Community involvement in youth programs can help in two ways: Employers learn that youth can be effective workers, and the programs learn from employers what they need.
- EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS. Job-getting and job-keeping skills are vital. Job-changing skills are also important because young people who may need to leave a current job, need to do so in a responsible manner.
- PROGRAM EVALUATION AND REVIEW. Periodic assessments should evaluate all program procedures as well as specific outcomes to find out what works and what doesn't, both for individual

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

participants and for the overall program. This information can be used to make program improvements and to demonstrate effectiveness.

STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINING SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS FOR HIGH-RISK YOUTH

Effective programs have common elements that can increase chances for success and stability. General elements of effectiveness follow:

- Programs should offer multiple options and comprehensive services. Problems of high-risk youth have many causes. Therefore, piecemeal approaches won't work.
- Programs should not require infusions of complex support personnel. Use of existing resources and mobilization of local people as agents of their own change are most effective. Program efforts should be directed to coordination rather than to replication of available services.
- Programs should have effective mechanisms for finding and building local leadership, rather than relying on the occasional charismatic leader.

New programs usually threaten existing status and power relationships. Programs likely to succeed should be built in the following stages:

- Program developers should select a program site with willing personnel.
- They should create positive preconditions for change by increasing staff awareness and knowledge of the program.
- They should provide incentives and build supports into the system to sustain personnel.
- If program benefits are long-term and not immediately apparent, intermediate incentives and rewards should be made available to participants to help them maintain motivation over the long term.

CONCLUSION

Research on effective youth programs shows that almost all young people can benefit and achieve when the foregoing elements are in place. Such programs should be targeted to youth and take their differing needs and abilities into account. Indeed, many existing programs seem to serve youth well. Young people from more advantaged backgrounds can and do acquire the skills they need to succeed in work and in society from parents, friends, acquaintances, and the resources available in their environment. Programs aimed at these youth only need to be refined to make them even more effective.

At-risk youth, however, often lack the opportunities and the adult role models available to their middle class peers. Both the schools and training programs should target special increased assistance to these high-risk groups, especially dropouts and economically disadvantaged minorities. These are the students who register the greatest individual gains from training and whose program participation results in the greatest cost savings to society.

REFERENCES

Elijah Anderson. *A Place on the Corner*. Chicago, IL.: University of Chicago Press. 1978.

Elijah Anderson. "Some Observations on Black Unemployment" in Bernard Anderson and Isabel Sawhill, eds. *Youth Employment and Public Policy*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1980.

Bernard Anderson. "How Much Did the Programs Help Minorities and Youth?" in Eli Ginzberg, ed. *Employing the Unemployed*. New York: Basic Books, 1981.

Albert Bandura. *Social Foundations of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1986.

Charles L. Betsey, Robinson G. Hollister Jr., and Mary R. Papagorgiou, eds. "Implication and Recommendations" in *Youth Employment and Training Programs: The YEDPA Years*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1985.

Center for National Policy Review. "Jobswatch Alert." Washington, D.C.: August 13, 1984.

Andrew Hahn and Jacqueline Danzberger, with Bernard Lefkowitz. *Dropouts in America: Enough is Known for Action*. Washington, D.C.: Institute for Educational Leadership, 1987.

Andrew Hahn and Robert Lerman. *What Works in Youth Employment Policy*. Washington, D.C.: Committee on New American Realities, 1985.

National Association of Counties. *Making Effective Youth Programming Choices in the JTPA*. Washington, D.C.: 1986.

Terrence Modglin, Jean O'Neil, Edward McMahon and Judith Zimmer. *Teens, Crime and the Community*. St. Paul, MN: West Publishing Company, 1987.

Office of Educational Research and Improvement. *What Works: Research About Teaching and Learning*. Second Edition.

Summary of recommendations from fifteen superintendents in replying to two questions on our questionnaire.

1. This summary is based upon the responses received to date to two questions which invited superintendents to make recommendations to this committee. The responses are from four borough districts, five city districts, and six Rural Education Attendance Areas.

Q: Are there state laws or regulations which handicap your efforts at obtaining the levels of student achievement your district seeks to realize?

FUNDING: The foundation formula needs to be adjusted to treat single site districts more fairly.

Costs of helping children "catch up" compete for dollars with all other needs.

INSTRUCTION: Time requirements (Carnegie units) need to be replaced by performance standards. "As long as lawmakers only require time, that's all they will get."

Burden of new assignments for schools (such as drug education, AIDS, etc.) takes away time from instruction in basic skills.

Programs that take students out for categorical reasons are disruptive.

STAFF: Certification regulations often bar the hiring of competent persons as teachers.

"The tenure law which allows tired, boring teachers to hold down jobs that might otherwise go to enthusiastic, energetic, competent teachers."

"Our hands are tied by unions and negotiated agreements."

REGULATIONS: Regulations are too much for a small district to comply with.

Vocational education concept is a "dinosaur." Unrealistic regulations require districts to obtain waivers.

Responding to too many regulations take away time from classroom concerns; "Local control seems to be eroding more each year."

Q. What do you think are the three or four most important steps the State Board of Education or the legislature should take to help schools improve their performance in basic skill areas

FUNDING: Fund adequately, in advance, and stay with the formula. (Five responses)

A cost-of-living increase should be included annually.

INSTRUCTION: The state should identify basic skills in performance terms and require districts to achieve them.

There should be a computerized curriculum management system for all schools to follow.

The Department of Education should assist districts in development of curriculum and materials selection.

The Department should provide on-site assistance to low-performing districts.

The Department should assist districts in development of language teaching skills and language curriculum development.

The state should provide incentive funding for schools that succeed. (Other states do.)

The state should take over schools that fail to perform adequately.

The state needs to support the concept of distance education and other alternative means of providing quality education.

Include early childhood education programs in the school funding formula.

RESEARCH: Research is needed to determine if current bilingual programs are teaching and preserving native languages.

Substantial research is needed on language development programs for rural children.

STAFF: Provide funding for statewide in-service training.

Adopt a statewide salary schedule for teachers and other staff to reduce local conflict and time-consuming negotiations.

Money spent by the Department for on-site monitoring should go for in-service training.

There should be a "disinterested third party" evaluation of probationary teachers, school board members, and administrators.

The University should be required to set standards for prospective teachers, the state should fund the university to hire only the best professors.

Provide "relief from problems related to tenure, negotiated agreements."

OTHER: Stop issuing regulations which categorize children.

Obtain input from <u>all</u> sectors when considering educational issues.

Do not attemptto solve problems at the local level by creating a monolithic structure at the state level; nurture a system of strong local districts.

----------Comments----------

a. My intention is to summarize responses to other questions on the questionnaire, but with the approach of the first hearing, I thought that the ones inviting superintendents to make recommendations would be of especial interest.

b. Gail Thibodeau (of Senator Fanning's office) and I have begun telephoning the 40 superintendents who have not replied to our request for information.

c. Several superintendents noted that legislative concern over school performance was, in itself, an important step toward improving schools. Another said emphatically that test scores -- which stimulated the formation of the committee -- were too utterly unreliable to even consider district by district comparisons.

Bob Arnold
8/23/88

Notes from an interview with John Bania about Buckland School, a school that is raising tested levels of achievement.

1. In the past four years, Buckland Elementary School has increased its composite score to rise 22 points on the percentile scale. Buckland resembles other villages in the region in income and educational levels and linguistic backgrounds. While in Kotzebue last week, I interviewed its principal, John Bania, and what follows are my notes from that interview.

2. "Most important, I expected everyone to succeed; we had high expectations, but they were within reach. We had a positive atmosphere -- no negative reinforcement."

3. "I expected everyone in school; if they weren't there, I went to get them. I talked with the parents and the child about the importance of learning....It's important for kids to know we're in this together and that they're in school to learn.

4. "To me, one of the keys is to find good people and keep them. I personally interview all prospective teachers... I look for people [who think as I do about what fosters learning], who are assertive, confident and calm, enthusiastic, eager to be part of a team, have a broad interest in learning, and who have the ability to exercise good judgment."

5. "Everyone in the school is vital to making progress -- teachers, aides, cooks, and maintenance persons. All staff must work together as a team."

6. "Student achievement has to be above and beyond anything else people think schools are for. Sometimes its difficult; school can't be all fun and games. There has to be a time for work and a time for play."

7. "The motivational factor: it's up to the principal and the teachers to create the interest...so the kids want to learn. Math can be presented (and sometimes is) in the driest way possible, but other teachers, they can make it interesting and important."

8. "Everything we do should build confidence and self-esteem in the students."

9. "At the top of my list in importance is telling students what is expected of them."

10. "There is a necessity that there be an orderly environment, cleanliness, discipline..."

11. "If we could win greater participation by parents, we could find even greater success. Community contact is important. I ask my teachers to call or visit the parent of every child and report something positive about that child by September 15 [and then to continue contacts]."

12. "If we're going to offer the kids the best education we can, we need to think about magnet schools [schools which offer a specialty] which students could attend away from the village, for science courses, for instance."

13. "I think I have a lot of good ideas, but I don't think I'm the only one. I'm always looking for new and better ways, I'm looking to learn from others."

----------Comments----------

a. The research literature testifies to the critical role a principal plays in the achievement of a school. Assistant Education Secretary Chester Finn says that if there was only one thing he could do to improve schools today, it would be to "hire the best principal I could find and then give that person ample authority and heavy responsibility."

b. In response to our questionnaire question about whether some schools in a district are higher achieving than others, some urban superintendents have said there were and pointed to the income levels of the neighborhoods as a factor; some rural superintendents have said there were and pointed to the quality of the principals and teachers as the factors.

c. In speaking to a pre-service session for teachers in the Northwest Arctic district (which includes Buckland), Superintendent Jerry Covey cited reasons often given for low levels of student achievement and rejected them. He called upon his teachers to take another approach:

> "We can believe more in our students and ourselves. Believe more in our ability to teach, our ability to make a difference in the lives of our students. We can have a smile for every child. We can be firm and fair and kind, and reach out and touch the lives of our students in a positive way... We actually have the power to convince kids that failure is not acceptable in our classrooms...
>
> Could it really be that students perform just about as well as we expect them to? If that is true, what would happen if we treated all kids as if they were "A" students... What if all of a sudden parents started to have faith is us because we had faith in ourselves and our students? .... Now is the time to go in NEW DIRECTIONS and do a better job of educating students and we will, together..."

Not surprisingly, Senator Hensley and I (who attended some of the pre-service sessions) thought the school year was off to a marvelous beginning.

Bob Arnold 8/29/88

Summary of joint hearing of the Quality Education for Minorities project and this committee, Anchorage, August 26-27, Anchorage.

DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

1. Alaska Natives are the largest minority in the state, making up 16 percent of the population; Blacks make up 3 percent, Asian/Pacific Islanders 2 percent, and others 2 percent. (1980 Census).

2. In 1980 the percentage of high school graduates among persons 25 years old or older was: White, almost 89 percent; Black, about 83 percent; Asian, about 77 percent, and Alaska Native, about 46 percent.

3. Nearly four times as many Native families with children in school are below the poverty level than are White families (1980 Census).

4. More than half of the state's 4,500 students identified as disadvantaged are Natives; almost 12 percent are Black, Asian, or Hispanic.

5. Three-fourths of the 11,437 students who are identified bilingual/bicultural are Natives; about 8 percent are Asian, about 5 percent are Hispanic; and about 12 percent are other.

6. Of Alaska's 6,372 teachers, 170 are Natives, 43 are American Indians, 146 are Blacks, 76 are Asian/Pacific Islanders, and 59 are Hispanics.

RESEARCH FINDINGS OF LIKELY IMPORTANCE

(Owing to the extent and detail of the presentation by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, I will prepare a a separate summary of that information.)

STATEMENTS OF THE PROBLEM

- The Alaska suicide rate is twice the national average and among Natives, it is twice that. Among Native males aged 20-24, it is 13 times that. Two thirds of Native suicides involve alcohol.

- Many Native families are dysfunctional because of racism, alcohol and drug abuse, incarceration, and conflicts between traditional cultures and new ways.

- A wide range of social problems were addressed by the Governor's Commission on Children and Youth, and most of the

recommendations on social problems received some funding; most of those dealing more directly with schools (such as parenting programs, teacher training for high-risk student identification, elementary school counselors, and funding for an early childhood education specialist) did not.

- Native people don't see themselves even today as having professional capabilities; they were never taught that they can be whatever they want to be. The jobs in rural Alaska are professional positions, often requiring a degree, but Natives are not prepared to hold those jobs.

- The university probably loses 60 percent of the Native students between the freshman and sophomore year. They are poorly prepared academically, and the stress they feel over that deficiency seems higher even than over the social issues.

- Many students seem to feel ashamed of the Native stereotypes that arise from reports of the conditions and problems of Natives.

- There are over 2,100 students in bilingual programs in Anchorage and over 100 different languages spoken; too many lack basic skills in English and have a low level of skills in their native language. Some hold jobs outside of school and their parents may both work full-time.

- Federal programs intended to help Natives result in students "being categorized as dumb Natives."

- The lack of caring and of high expectations on the part of teachers toward Blacks has led to the problem of low achievement.

- Of all programs of the [Anchorage] school districts, the ones Blacks go to is special education.

- Education is a bittersweet experience for Natives; it is helpful to deal with new times, but it drives a wedge between the traditional and the new.

- In our area, Natives are graduating from the schools, but the retail store says they are not qualified to be clerks; the Native corporations are finding the same thing.

- Most Natives are placed in "bonehead" course when they enter college.

- All children can learn, but too many are not.

- The assumption is made that there was no education before the western system. That's incorrect. And parents didn't interfere with the person having the responsibility.

- Villagers get the worst teachers and we can't fire them because of tenure.

- There is no local control, only regional. The advisory boards have no power.

- Our fear of testing is that only a "fuzzy and inaccurate" picture will emerge; teachers accept or reject scores based on what we know about the students.

- Children enter school eager to learn, but lack a support system; by the third or fourth grade, when school becomes more of a workplace than a social place, they drop back.

- Alcohol, drug abuse, suicide -- "there is a cycle of destruction upon my people."

- Students are moved ahead without having made progress; in the next course, they simply feel lost.

- There are no student loans for part-time learners.

- Native students who are bilingual are placed in special education and labelled "learning disabled." Some teachers admit this is an error, but it is a way to get special services for the children.

- Special education teacher often lack the training needed to work with linguistic or cross-cultural issues.

- The incidence of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome is sharply rising.

- As persons involved in cultural transition we still see things differently from others.

- Schools have been the most persuasive force for deculturation.

- Students report that the persistence of racism and prejudice are blocks to their progress.

REMEDIES: THE SCHOOL'S ETHOS AND ORGANIZATION

- The school system must show that it believes all children can learn, can succeed.

- We can improve student performance by implementing principles of effective schooling, and quit using cultural diversity or lack of parental involvement as an excuse.

- The Department of Education should play a leadership role in effective schooling, and provide technical assistance to those schools that want to be effective.

- The schools must have a positive atmosphere and be characterized by a cooperative spirit; the students must know that they are there to learn.

- My review of three schools show the successful ones to places of high expectations, places kids enjoy being, and where parents are welcome; there is strong Native leadership, Native culture is throughout the curriculum, not separate, and the school is accountable to the community.

- Peer tutoring and peer counseling are generally sound approaches; leave professionals out except as a last resort.

- Schedule Blacks into demanding coursework.

- What is most important is for the schools to build in Blacks a sense of self-esteem.

- There has to be much more cooperative learning in schools. Achievement has to be emphasized; homework and completion of homework must be required.

- Native students need to develop a positive self-image in school.

- We need more parents to work in the schools, to work in the resource centers, and to be paid. [This will provide additional role models.]

- Space should be set aside in the school for parents to gather and made to feel welcome.

- We need to keep hope alive in the student.

- We need to demand attendance and impose penalties upon those who do not attend.

- Kids are individuals, and learn at different rates, but we have a lock-step pattern in schools. Kids have a right to learn at their own pace (and these kids aren't just minority students).

REMEDIES: CURRICULUM

- We have developed competency statements K-8 in all basic skills -- reading, language arts, math, and computer literacy.

- Native history needs to be integrated into the schools.

- We need to rid the curriculum of [ability] tracking systems.

- Distance delivery systems can provide relevant curriculum and occupational training.

- Parenting skills must be a part of the curriculum.

- Television courses should be used in small villages.

- Native languages should be preserved.

- Speech should be part of every school's curriculum.

- Alaska history and ANCSA must be a part of the curriculum.
- Native studies are shapers of an improved self-image and should be integrated into the curriculum.

- The State Board of Education should appoint a task force to review all materials intended for Native studies.

- Textbooks should be reviewed to determine whether they, like so many, belittle or demean minority people.

- Kids in the classroom need a better understanding of cross-cultural communications.

- Native language speakers need a solid foundation in their first language; research says it takes five to seven years, but we terminate their studies in three.

- We should not seek to raise academic levels at the expense of Native language and culture.

- The State Board should define more fully what should be required for graduation.

- The state should ensure -- through an accountability plan - that the children are competent in a variety of skills and intelligences to prepare them for the "best of both worlds."

- The Department of Education should develop, in cooperation with Native groups, a one-semester course covering the cultures of Native group.

- One of many courses available for computers is basic communication skills; it is racially balanced, allows self-pacing; it is being used at Akiachak.

- Native students can be empowered to learn, but this will be contingent upon the extent to which minority students' language and culture is incorporated into the school program, the minority community is encouraged to participate, the pedagogy promotes the use of language by students to generate their own knowledge, and those involved in assessment become advocates, instead of legitimizing the location of the problem in the student.

REMEDIES: PROFESSIONAL STAFF

- The subtle ethnocentrism of teachers must be overcome.

- The university needs to look at its teacher preparation programs; it should work with the school districts.

- We need a more complete counseling program, including for the adults of a community.

- We need to employ more minority teachers, especially Natives.

- Preservice orientation for teachers is required to help them understand Native cultures, know that all children can learn and they need to know that they can succeed.

- Funding for staff development in effective schooling should be provided by the legislature.

- We need educators committed to empowering students; in Los Angeles, principals can transfer teachers who are not committed to the goals of the school.

- We cannot really make progress without Black teachers and counselors; it is also important that Whites see Blacks in important roles.

- Principals and teachers should be made accountable for the education of Black students.

- Teachers need to take the lead in improving the school climate.

- What is required is higher standards for those entering teaching as a career.

- Teachers need to be taught that they have the responsibility of building self-confidence in learners.

- Teacher aide training should be modeled on the health aide training programs; there should be opportunities for aides to go on to obtain degrees.

- If standards are raised for teacher certification, such a change should be accompanied by higher pay; new standards could reduce the number of minorities entering teaching.

- Certification for teachers of Native language and culture on the basis of life experience should be allowed by law.

- There is a critical need for more trained bilingual teachers and administrators.

- A strong affirmative action plan is needed in every district.

REMEDIES: PARENTS, THE COMMUNITY

- Schools should involve parents in assemblies, as tutors, as chaperones, and as teachers of instructional units.

- Schools should be required to meet with parents and the community to develop plans to cooperatively meet the needs of high risk students.

- Schools need to be aggressive in getting parents involved. As parents become more comfortable with the school, their children will do better in school.

- Funding should be provided to help schools get parents involved.

- Parent control should mean control over the curriculum and over the hiring and firing of teachers.

- If parental involvement cannot be obtained, the school's obligation [to assure that children learn] persists.

- It is important for the school to assure that parents know about alternative programs.

- Parents and kids need to know what is to be learned and why; parents need to know they are the most important advocates of their kids.

- We need a PTA in every village, and we can solve the problems.

- We think parental involvement is the key to obtaining regular attendance and timeliness.

REMEDIES: OTHER

- A prep school on the college campus is needed; it would require scholarship support.

- The State needs to fund early childhood programs. The first three years should be community based; the next two should be through an expanded Headstart-type program.

- The school must be made accountable to the community.

- There should be evening programs for parents to work with their youngsters in gaining skills.

- More specialized courses need to be incorporated into the distance delivery system.

- There needs to be follow-up of students after graduation and postsecondary counseling.

- The vocational education system needs to be looked at; there should be partnerships with industry.

- Schools that decrease drop-outs and increase attendance should be rewarded.

- There is a need for a data base to understand what is going on for Native students.

- Perhaps a thirteenth year of schooling in the village (with short travel away) would be helpful.

- The State Board should create a Task Force on Native Education.

- We need summer programs and tutoring.

- More dollars are needed for the bilingual programs to save the Native kids from being labeled "learning disabled."

- With regard to special education, parents need to know their rights; they can refuse the program, but they don't know this.

- We should plan for partnerships between the school and the community, with the social service agencies, and with businesses.

- Cultural learning centers need to be established in villages to help coordinate programs and facilitate parenting and early childhood programs.

- Maybe the school year should be cycled around village life to allow the teaching of subsistence, for instance.

- There is a need to establish goals for Native education and then hold educators accountable.

- We should explore new ways -- longer school days, computer assisted instruction, summer school, regional centers for learning.

- Whenever a minority person leaves a school district position, there should be an exit interview.

Bob Arnold 9/7/88

---------- Comments ----------

a. These two days of hearings allowed about 19 hours of testimony from spokespersons for minority organizations, school board members, superintendents, university faculty, teachers, bilingual program specialists, and others. Dr. Shirley McBay of MIT said the number of persons heard -- 78 -- was larger than at any of the other hearings held by her panel.

b. My intention in this compilation was to capture the principal ideas set out by persons appearing before our two panels, rather than preparing a fuller record such as is being prepared by the MIT-Carnegie group.

c. As someone who both listened to the testimony and and read and re-read his full tablet of scribbled notes, I would like to offer some observations on what I think we heard.

First, many of the actions urged to help remedy underachievement among minorities are actions that the research suggests ought to be taken by school districts to help all of those who may be less motivated, less well prepared for the work, or less quick at learning the curriculum. These include holding high expectations, requiring homework, assuring mastery, obtaining parental involvement, peer tutoring and counseling, improving school climate, early childhood education, building a sense of self-esteem in students, and abandoning ability tracking except for special and limited purposes.

Second, other barriers to achievement of minorities are not going to be overcome simply by making schools better for everyone based on research about what makes effective schools. Persons testifying pointed out that children with limited English proficiency require special programs of varying kinds (home language or ESL, for instance) and of varying duration; a curriculum that is relevant, respectful and supportive of Native and other cultures is needed; there must be increasing numbers of Native, Blacks, and Hispanics in teaching and administrative positions as role models; and categorical programs that result in large numbers of Natives or Blacks being called "learning disabled" when such a classification is inappropriate (and may be hurtful rather than helpful) need to be reexamined.

Third, what is terribly adverse to a good learning environment for all (and to the future of our society) is the persistence of prejudice, and affirmative efforts to end such attitudes must be made.

Fourth, lying behind some learner problems are serious social issues in families and communities that schools cannot address alone. Cooperative efforts are required.

Bob Arnold 9/11/88

Senate Special Committee on School Performance No. 21

Report of the Gallup Organization of its poll on geographic literacy, July 1988.

---

1. This survey, commissioned by the National Geographic Society, was conducted in the United States and eight other countries. Tests were given to 10,820 adults.

2. Americans came in at sixth place on the test, but young adult Americans (ages 18-24) came in last among young adults of all nine countries. These young Americans were the only young adults who did worse than the oldest group tested.

3. More information on the results and the test itself is contained in two enclosures, one from the New York Times and another from Newsweek.

----------Comments----------

a. Even if geography is not taught in the school, the ignorance of on places and subjects in the news -- Persian Gulf, Vietnam, Nicaragua, and NATO -- astonished me. Don't the schools encourage the reading of newspapers?

b. To address the problem of geographic literacy, the National Geographic Society has launched an outreach program for teachers to help them "make geography come alive." One of the 64 teachers selected for the 1988 summer institute was Louis Yanotti, a teacher in Yakutat, who is currently head of the Alaska Council for the Social Studies. Each teacher is expected to hold at least three workshops is his or her home state.

c. Only a few states require the study of geography; Alaska does not, since Alaska does not require any specific subjects to be taught.

d. Not everyone is alarmed. The director of the Committee for the Study of the American Electorate told the New York Times that "not being able to locate a place on the map doesn't necessarily mean these people haven't been following what's going on there... It's the content and the critical thought that's important."

e. But isn't it hard to think critically about issues affecting some countries if you don't know where they are and who their neighbors are? Nearly one fifth of young adult Americans couldn't locate the United States on a world map. Isn't that a handicap in thinking critically about all kinds of issues facing America?

Bob Arnold 9/6/88

Notes from The Mathematics Report Card: Are We Measuring Up? Educational Testing Service, June 1988, 143 pages.

1. Students aged 9 and 17 have made significant gains since 1978, but the gains are in lower order skills. Most students, even at age 17, do not possess the proficiency needed for secondary school math.

2. Blacks and Hispanics are making progress in reducing the gap between their performance and that of other students.

3. Only half of the 17-year olds tested demonstrated the proficiency associated with junior high math. [The rest] "appear to scarcely be able to perform the kinds of numerical operations that will likely be required of them in future life and work settings." (See Attachment A for example.)

4. Although more students are taking higher level math courses, the overall percentage taking Algebra II, Geometry, and Calculus remains "disappointingly low."

5. Only one in five 9-year olds have mastered basic mathematical operations and beginning problem solving, though both are part of elementary school instruction. (See Attachment B for example.) The gap between expected performance and actual performance is larger at age 13 and larger still at age 17.

6. Colleges report a 10 to 30 percent rise in demand for remedial coursework in math for incoming freshmen.

7. The most recent international study said that average Japanese students exhibited higher levels of achievement than the top five percent of American students.

8. Current research suggests that students spend too much time on drill and practice and too little time in discovering connections and gaining experience in an array of practical situations.

9. Math educators recommend the use of calculators and computers, but few schools provide or use them. "The calculator can liberate students from time-consuming computations, freeing them to tackle more challenging tasks."

10. The benefits of using computers and calculators seem to be available primarily to students in the higher range of abilities in the upper grades.

11. Students who reported using a computer for problem solving tended to have higher mathematic proficiency than those who did not.

12. Despite recommendations arising from research about instructional strategies, only a small percentage of students in three age groups report working at math in small groups, making reports, or working at laboratory activities. Instead, teachers explain, work problems at the chalkboard, and have students work on their own.

13. Particularly at the higher grades, the more homework, the higher the proficiency.

14. More homework is being assigned, but deeper educational changes are needed.

15. "Achieving a higher quality mathematics curriculum across schools in the United States will require new materials, effective instructional methods, and improved means of evaluating student performance.

"There are many well qualified and dedicated teachers in our classrooms capable of promoting improved ways of learning. In order to do so, our teachers will need the support of administrators, parents, and the public at large.

"No longer can society afford to view mathematics as a subject for a chosen few or as a domain solely composed of arithmetic skills. Students must come to see it as a way of thinking, communicating, and resolving problems.

"Until American schools move toward these more ambitious goals in mathematics instruction, there is little hope that current levels of achievement will show any appreciable gain."

----------Comments----------

a. This report is part of the highly regarded National Assessment of Educational Progress. It is based upon a sampling of students from four regions of the country in 1986.

b. The writers report that the sample sizes of other ethnic groups, such as American Indians, were too small to be considered reliable, and it is for that reason no data are given.

c. Even though no students in Alaska were included in this assessment, I report it to you because I think we can infer that the findings probably resemble what we would find in Alaska. Some classrooms, some schools, and some districts might be sharply different from one another, but I don't know of any evidence that would allow us to argue that the concerns expressed over proficiency levels or instructional strategies overall would not apply here.

Bob Arnold 9/7/88

ATTACHMENT A

LEVEL 300

Moderately Complex Procedures and Reasoning

1986

Age 9	Age 13	Age 17
0.6	15.9	51.1

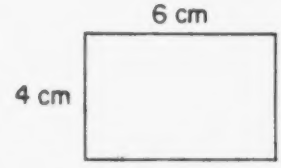
Students performing at or above Level 300 demonstrate more sophisticated numerical reasoning, and are beginning to draw from a wider range of mathematical skill areas, including algebra and geometry. A set of sample items representative of Level 300 performance is provided below.

Which of the following is true about 87% of 10?

- ○ It is greater than 10.
- ● It is less than 10.
- ○ It is equal to 10.
- ○ Can't tell.
- ○ I don't know.

If $7x + 4 = 5x + 8$, then $x =$

- ○ 1
- ● 2
- ○ 4
- ○ 6



What is the area of this rectangle?

- ○ 4 square cm
- ○ 6 square cm
- ○ 10 square cm
- ○ 20 square cm
- ● 24 square cm
- ○ I don't know.

ATTACHMENT B

LEVEL 250

Basic Operations and Beginning Problem Solving

1986		
Age 9	Age 13	Age 17
20.8	73.1	96.0

Students performing at or beyond Level 250 on the proficiency scale have developed a surface understanding of the four basic operations, and are beginning to acquire more developed reasoning skills. A series of sample problems indicative of performance at Level 250 is provided below.

Which is worth the most?

- ○ 11 nickels
- ● 6 dimes
- ○ 1 half dollar
- ○ I don't know

Subtract

604
−207

ANSWER 397

There are 10 airplanes on the ground. 6 take off and 4 more land. How many are on the ground then?

- ○ 4
- ● 8
- ○ 14
- ○ 20

At the store, the price of a carton of milk is 40¢, an apple is 25¢, and a box of crackers is 30¢. What is the cost of an apple and a carton of milk?

- ○ 55¢
- ● 65¢
- ○ 70¢
- ○ 95¢

180

Notes from "Toward More Effective Education for Poor, Minority Students in Rural Areas: What the Research Suggests," by Robert R. Rath, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Portland, August 26, 1988, 24 pages.

BARRIERS TO HIGH STUDENT PERFORMANCE

1. Student factors include limited English proficiency, conflict between home culture and school, culture of poverty (fatalism, frustration, alienation), dysfunctional families, single parent families, absenteeism from school, and social isolation.

2. School system factors include high staff turnover (with resultant lack of continuity in programs), small size and isolation, ineffective teaching, low expectations by teachers for students, inadequate staffing levels, inadequate staffing levels, tests not aligned with curriculum, ability tracking, and the lack of a strong school and community partnership.

STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS

1. Most of the research has not been done in Alaska; second, research evidence is typically correlational rather than cause and effect. Nonetheless, there is "powerful guidance emerging from these studies."

2. "Current research on multicultural pluralism and effective schooling practices provides us with the most promising direction.... [A second strand is that] goals, standards, and practices of the school must be consistent with, and developed in partnership with, parents and community members."

Parent and community involvement

1. "The evidence overwhelmingly demonstrates that parental involvement in the school and with children's learning is positively related to achievement, behavior, self-concept, future expectations, attendance, and motivation of their children." And the earlier it begins, the more powerful the positive effects will be.

2. Some strategies to foster parent involvement include "Saturday schools" (attended by parents and children), home visits by school staff, transportation for parents to attend school events, accommodation by the school of parent work schedules, and parent run child care or adult education programs in the schools.

3. "Community agreement on desired schooling outcomes is essential for effective schooling to take place, as well as community participation in reviewing progress toward these desired outcomes." It appears that the greater involvement of the community in governance, the greater potential for ensuring improvement.

4. There are positive benefits from parents and community members serving as teacher or language aides and acting as bridges between the culture and language of the teacher and that of the student.

School and district structures and practices

1. High performing schools and districts have well-defined mission statements, goals and objectives, and clear standards for student performance (achievement, attitude, aspiration).

2. The real leadership challenge: instill the belief that all students can learn well.

3. A key finding of recent research has been the long-term outcomes of early education for poor and minority students.

4. Curriculum characteristics associated with improved performance include a language/communication approach, emphasis on learning-to-learn skills and content, alignment of objectives with materials and tests, and relevant to culture and to student futures.

5. Textbooks dominate the curriculum, but studies indicate that "the instructional quality of textbooks is seriously lacking."

6. "... careful schoolwide monitoring of student performance is a significant characteristic of high performing schools." Standardized tests results are used to set priorities for improvements.

7. High performing schools are characterized by a supportive environment, warm and responsive teachers, high expectations, students valuing excellence and believing they can achieve it, an instructional leader who takes responsibility for outcomes, high and low achievers working together, sense of family among students and staff, and involvement with community.

8. Recruiters of teachers should review studies on characteristics of persons to avoid; persons who are hired should be afforded in-service training.

Classroom structure and practices

1. Effective teaching requires that the teacher hold high expectations for all students, teach to objectives in a planned curriculum, give clear directions, check for understanding and reteach as necessary, maintain a brisk pace, keep interruptions to a minimum, show personal warmth to students, respect and incorporate home cultures into the classroom, adjust instructional techniques as necessary, monitor work and provide feedback, assure that all levels of thinking are required, maintain a task orientation, and relate current learning to past learning.

2. "Only high-ability students benefit from homogenous 'ability' grouping ...[and] there are harmful effects for low-ability students."

3. Peer tutoring and cooperative learning strategies can produce significant results in improved performance.

4. Training of teachers on student assessment is needed. Researchers found that "teachers assess students' behavioral and interactional styles almost as much as they assess academic performance... For minority students, whose interactional expectations differ from those of the teacher, these assessments can be especialy inappropriate or unfair."

5. Although reducing class size will not, in itself, raise student achievement, smaller classes accompanied by high quality teaching may produce improved performance by ethnic minorities, disadvantaged, and low achieving students, and by pupils in the primary grades.

POLICY ISSUES AND OPTIONS

1. Implementation by State: Incentive strategy? Developmental support for districts? Adopt curriculum standards with common core of learning? Require districts to plan for improvements, evaluate, and report to State?

2. Policy partnerships: New partnerships between schools and business, industry, and labor are needed. Only effective partnerships with a community can enable a school to overcome some problems, such as alcohol or drug abuse.

3. Accountability policy: The old view was that schools needed to provide opportunities. It is being replaced by an "obligation" vision: "Judge the schools on how well they deliver on student performance for all students."

4. Long-range vs. short-range policy: Early childhood education is cost-effective, but its results will be two decades away. Drop-out prevention programs may provide earlier results, but should they be launched if it would mean neglecting the next generation of students?

5. Research: Research on success characteristics of Natives (like that of Demmert and Silverman) is needed, rather than research which focuses on deficits.

6. Implementing effective schooling: Effective schooling practices do improve performance in poor, rural, minority areas and should be supported.

Bob Arnold 9/9/88

Extracts from "Computer Competence: The First National Assessment," Educational Testing Service, April 1988, 82 pages.

1. In 1983, A Nation at Risk identified computer competence as a fourth basic skill....By 1986, the time was ripe for the first nationwide assessment in computer competence. The assessment was a large-scale project, involving 24,000 students [in grades 3, 7, and 11].

2. [The three categories of objectives developed for the assessment were:] knowledge of computer technology, understanding of computer applications, and understanding of computer programming.

3. Most American youngsters have some familiarity with computers. Most, for example, can identify a keyboard, disk drive, and printer. Most have some practical knowledge of computers... But with the exception of word processing, only a small fraction were able to answer questions about the most important computer applications or about programming.

Frequency of Computer Application Use — TABLE 2.3

How often do you use a computer to:	Frequency: Almost Every Day	Several Times a Week	About Once a Week	Less than Once a Week	Never
		Grade 7			
Write Letters, Stories, Reports	3.4%	6.9%	12.5%	27.0%	50.2%
Make Graphs	2.2	3.5	6.5	14.8	73.0
Make a Database	1.5	2.4	4.1	7.5	84.6
		Grade 11			
Write Letters, Stories, Reports	4.4%	6.1%	8.5%	27.4%	53.5%
Make Graphs	1.4	2.0	4.3	13.3	78.9
Make a Database	2.2	3.4	3.3	8.5	82.7

4. When third- and seventh-grade students were asked if they like using computers, more than 86 percent in both grades responded affirmatively.... Most students who had used computers wished they could use them more often in class.

5. Computer studies has been called a basic subject. One characteristic of a basic subject is that its skills are useful across curriculum domains. To what extent do students use computers in other subject areas? Not enough to fully tap the computer's potential for enhancing learning in traditional subjects.

Frequency of Computer Use in Subject Areas — TABLE 3.6

How often do you use a computer to:	Almost Every Day	Several Times a Week	About Once a Week	Less than Once a Week	Never
Frequency—Grade 7					
Practice Math	5.7%	4.7%	9.8%	17.5%	62.3%
Practice Reading	3.1	3.8	5.9	8.8	78.4
Practice Spelling	2.8	3.3	7.8	10.0	76.1
Do Science Problems	1.9	2.9	3.1	6.8	85.3
Learn and Make Music	2.4	3.0	6.2	10.3	78.1
Play Games	19.4	15.4	16.3	24.6	24.3
Frequency—Grade 11					
Practice Math	3.4%	3.0%	3.6%	12.1%	77.9%
Practice Reading	1.8	2.1	2.0	6.9	87.2
Practice Spelling	1.4	1.6	2.8	6.7	87.5
Do Science Problems	0.8	1.5	1.9	8.6	87.2
Learn and Make Music	1.4	1.7	2.2	9.0	85.6
Play Games	8.5	9.8	14.0	33.9	33.8

6. In middle and high schools, the use of computers is largely confined to computer studies. This compartmentalization restricts students from using the computer as a general-purpose learning tool that is useful across curriculum domains.

7. Throughout the span of three grades, roughly 30 percent of students have a computer at home. The importance of home computers is highlighted by the fact that more than half of seventh- and eleventh-grade students whose families own a computer reported that they learn most about computers at home. This is unusual among school subjects: It is unlikely that such high proportions of students would learn more at home than at school in, for example, biology or history.

8. When racial/ethnic groups were compared in terms of overall computer competence, White students were shown to have a clear advantage over Black and Hispanic students across the grades.... Across the grades, families of White students are more likely to have a computer at home than families of Black or Hispanic students.

9. Many computer coordinators have minimal training in computer studies and rate themselves as mediocre in their ability to use computers.

----------Comments----------

a. The reason I provided virtually no statistical data on computer competence results is that such large percentages of the sample never use the computer to write letters or reports (more than 50 percent), never make graphs or a database (73 to 86 percent), and never write computer programs (60 to 68 percent). It seems to me the meaning of the data is much diminished by the small percentage of the sample actually using computers.

b. The number of microcomputers in Alaska in 1987 (about 7,000) averaged one for each fifteen students, an improvement over five years ago when the average was one for each 55 students. The Department of Education is now compiling information on computers on a district by district basis.

c. The Associated Press reported this week that the ratio of students to computers across America is 30 to 1 and that students with access to computers get to use them just one hour a week. The news item was based upon a new report by the congressional Office of Technology Assessment. I have ordered a copy.

d. As you will note, I haven't included sample computer competence questions (as I did with other NAEP assessments), and I should explain. I did very well on the computer technology questions, but so did most of the third-graders. I couldn't answer most computer application questions (even on word processing) nor any of the programming questions. Knowing my experience -- if you want to test yourself on the samples, please let me know.

Bob Arnold 9/9/88

Report on meeting of the Department of Education and its assessment committee with test publishers on August 13, 1988.

1. The Department of Education has proposed a regulation that would require all school districts to administer a uniform test for grades 4, 6, and 8 to provide a common database on basic skill performance of students. To contribute to that end, the department asked test publishers to consider and respond to several issues such as cultural fairness of tests and appropriate reporting of results.

2. To hear the responses of test publishers, the department brought together its special committee on measurement and a few others -- about 30 persons in all. Once we listened to the presentations, we gathered in small groups to consider what advice to give the department. What I heard in the reports of the small groups included:

The proposed testing program

- The department should clearly define which students are to be tested and which are to be excluded.
- Limited English proficiency students should not take a comprehensive battery of tests until they have gained sufficient proficiency in English.
- The testing program should be as non-intrusive as possible.
- Tests should be subjected to Alaska review for cultural bias.
- Test publishers should have the ability to do a content match with each district, to assist districts in correlating earlier scores from other tests, and to provide testing services for other grades.

Reporting test results once program is adopted

- Test results should not be seen as the sole measures of school performance; other indicators should be identified by the department.
- Proposed student questionnaires should be the bases of new ways of aggregating data for reporting purposes.
- Test results should not be used to rank districts.
- Questionnaires should include questions such as whether the student comes from a single-parent home.

- Test result reports should reflect change in achievement over time.

- School districts should be invited to provide information to the department which put district scores into perspective.

3. One of the spokesmen for one publisher was interviewed by the Anchorage Daily News, and a copy of that article is attached.

----------Comments----------

a. The process the department is following in moving toward a statewide testing program seems to me to be a good one. There is broad representation on its committee and the participants are serious minded. Most of the concerns are issues that can be dealt with once the regulation is adopted.

b. Given nationwide concerns over accountability and the Alaska legislature's concern over school performance, I was somewhat astonished that two school officials in my small group were skeptical of any need for uniform tests and public reports of the results. They did agree, however, that what a school does and how well it does it is not exclusively a concern of the community the school serves.

c. The Board of Education is scheduled to take up the regulation providing for the statewide assessment at its next meeting. Detailed planning (including the selection of a test publisher) would follow, but implementation for the 1989-90 school year would be dependent upon funding (about $110,000) by the legislature in the next session.

d. In the attached report of an interview with H. D. Hoover, a test-writer, Hoover sounds like Coleman or Jencks of the 1960's when he says the gap in test scores between minorities and whites "will disappear only when minorities enjoy economic parity with whites." Although his remark is a reminder of the importance of social and economic factors in levels of student performance, it is, in my view, one of those forecasts that too readily becomes a defense for doing nothing to reduce the gap. As Hoover points out, however, "gaps in scores between minorities and whites have shrunk" over the years.

Bob Arnold
9/19/88

Senate Special Committee on School Performance No. 26

Alaska State Board of Education goals and initiatives (Draft II) June 13, 1988

1. At its June retreat, the State Board of Education developed a statement of goals and initiatives for itself. The goals address student achievement, at-risk students, professional development, district administration, funding, and departmental support. Specifically, the State Board will:

- act to improve the educational experiences of students in order to assure that each student may reach his or her full potential;

- define and identify "at-risk" students and develop and support preventive and remedial strategies to assist those students...

- strive to improve the skills of teachers, school administrators, and education support personnel...

- encourage incentives and alternatives to promote greater efficiency in the administration of districts;

- develop, through collaborative efforts, an action agenda to increase support for public education;

- define, develop, and support [departmental] programs to assure that each contributes to public educational opportunities.

2. The complete goal and initiatives statement is attached.

3. The Board and the department are continuing to work at refining the goals, creating subcommittees, and developing an action agenda and timeline for their accomplishment.

---------- Comments ----------

a. The attached pages are important reading. I have tried to think critically about their content, and though I have a few quibbles, I think the State Board and the Commissioner have done an outstanding job of identifying most of the specific topics that need to be addressed to help assure that all children and youth benefit from schooling.

b. The Board has identified the wide array of factors that affect the outcomes of schooling -- curriculum, professional staff, classroom strategies, and so on. Its statement reflects good knowledge of the research literature. And the Board has not avoided sensitive but important issues such as examination of teacher tenure or consideration of the administrative consolidation of school districts.

c. The framing of the initiatives reflects the current distribution of authority over schooling (i.e. virtually all authority is lodged in school districts and REAA's) and does not seek any change in the authority.

d. What a good list of things worth doing, but what an ambitious series of tasks! The department's Division of Educational Program Support isn't very large (about a dozen professional staffers, after federally-funded positions are subtracted), so the priority ranking the board plans to do will be very important. Budget increments for the department would help, but with oil prices remaining below the $15 level, the department may decide to apply to private foundations (as it already does for some of its projects).

e. Now to a few of my quibbles: (1) Since all six goals are aimed at raising student achievement, five of them should be subordinated. I also kind of like the preference Bob Rath (NWREL) shows for student "performance" over "achievement," the former being more inclusive (academic achievement, student attitudes, aspirations, behaviors).

(2) Since neither the legislature nor the state board has adopted a purpose and goals of schooling, it will not surprise you to know that I think consideration of those subjects should be on the board's list.

(3) I think the need for computer competence is great enough and the need for the department to give leadership to the issue that it should be addressed. It may that it is subsumed under the initiative dealing with model competencies generally.

(4) Neither accreditation nor categorical programs are made specific subjects of initiatives. About half the schools in the state are accredited and half are not. Does it matter? And, do categorical programs result in labelling (such as "learning disabled") when it is unwarranted?

(5) Some who testified at our first hearing called for the board to be more specific in what coursework would be required for graduation, but that issue is not presently on the agenda for consideration.

f. Since I furnish these memoranda to the state board president (and others) as well as to members of the special committee, I should note that in my comments I am speaking to legislators, not for them.

Bob Arnold
9/20/88

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION GOALS
DRAFT II
June 13, 1988

PHILOSOPHY: (Language to be developed)

GOAL I STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The State Board of Education will act to improve the educational experiences of students in order to assure that each student may reach his or her full potential.

Initiatives related to Goal I

* Require all school districts to develop and define minimum outcomes and competencies of local public education efforts

* Develop a "model" set of outcomes and competencies for use by local school districts to be used as a framework by school districts

* Provide State leadership in identifying and disseminating successful instructional characteristics and model programs

* Advocate a balance between classroom performance and extra-curricular activities that promote academic, athletic, social and cultural skills

* Provide a climate for innovation and improvement of local practices including such activities as:
  - considering alternatives for the organization and structure of schools;
  - providing incentives for excellence;
  - exploring ways to raise expectations for students;
  - facilitating networking activities between school districts;
  - establishing recognition programs which reward improvement

* In conjunction with the school districts, develop a statewide student assessment program that is designed to meet the needs of students, teachers, administrators, parents, policy makers and legislators

* Recommend changes in resource allocation and instructional methods based on ongoing evaluation of assessment program outcomes

* Support the integration of Native Alaska language and culture programs and perspectives into the curriculum of elementary and secondary schools

* Identify and develop innovative practices for distance learning; advocate funding for such practices

GOAL II "AT-RISK" STUDENTS

The State Board of Education will define and identify "at-risk" students and develop and support preventive and remedial strategies to assist those students to overcome the factors and circumstances that place them "at-risk".

Initiatives related to Goal II

* Examine factors that contribute to student drop-out, compile data, and develop appropriate and effective remediation

* Search for solutions to existing problems associated with substance abuse, teen pregnancy, adolescent suicide, and other social and health problems

* Form collaborative relations to inform and galvanize public support, coordinate efforts, develop comprehensive programs and assure adequate funding for early childhood education

* Work with education coalition to develop strategy for increasing the number of counselors in schools and level of service to students

* Establish collaborative relations to enhance parenting skills as a strategy to assist in meeting needs of students

* Promote the development of a primary language base for young children

* Explore structural alternatives for increased learning time and improved instructional practices

GOAL III PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The State Board of Education will strive to improve the skills of teachers, school administrators, and education support personnel in their professional growth and development.

Initiatives related to Goal III

* Restate what teachers, school administrators, and certificated support staff are expected to know and be able to do when they enter into their professional duties, and devising means by which to measure accountability

* Examine professional certification and endorsement: consider standards to require that teachers be placed in teaching situations consistent with their areas of endorsement or preparation; consider teacher competency testing

* Recognize excellence in professional performance

* Recommend strategies to improve the proportion of minorities employed in professional positions in education

* Work with the University of Alaska and other state postsecondary institutions to strengthen teacher education programs, and to include support for professional development schools

* Examine the teacher/administrator evaluation system and recommend improvements, including parent and student evaluations

* Examine teacher tenure as it affects quality of education and district program management

* Provide support and resources to support continuing professional development opportunities for certificated personnel

GOAL IV DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

The State Board of Education will encourage incentives and alternatives to promote greater efficiency in the administration of school districts.

Initiatives related to Goal IV

* Initiate discussions with school district board members, through the Assocation of Alaska School Boards, to identify areas of mutual concern regarding school district administration

* Examine the costs, in both dollars and time commitments, and benefits to be derived by certain school districts should administrative functions be consolidated

* Identify incentives that would accomodate a change in administrative operations by school districts that would protect district identity, and make funds which are spent on district administration available for instructional programs

GOAL V SUPPORT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

The State Board of Education, through collaborative efforts, will develop an action agenda to increase support for public education.

Initatives related to Goal V

* Continue to participate in the Alaska Coalition for Education

* Initiate efforts to provide a greater degree of stability and predictability for allocation of state aid for education in order to improve financial planning by school districts

* Identify effective methods for garnering public support for implementation of remedies for these concerns, and develop a plan to marshal forces to achieve political solutions to the identified concerns

* Decide on a method to determine what the actual cost of education in the state should be; consider involvement in the area cost differential study being conducted by the Legislature when appropriate

* Support efforts to assure equity of state aid distribution among school districts

* Develop cooperative programs with the University of Alaska *and state private institutions of higher education* to provide research and technical assistance for school districts

GOAL VI DEPARTMENT SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Recognizing that many of the programs of the Department of Education can be valuable supplements to classroom initiatives, the State Board of Education will define, develop and support these programs so as to better assure that each contributes to public educational opportunities.

Initiatives related to Goals VI

* Review, evaluate, initiate and support policy and program changes in programs assigned by law to the Department, that meet the State's commitment to public education, including:
  - expanded opportunity for placement of vocational rehabilitation clients in state and school district employment;
  - adult and postsecondary literacy efforts;
  - revised support for library operations in smaller communities;
  - revision of mission statement of the state museum, and adoption of regulations to support community-based museums and a traditional Native arts grant program

* Align division activities with State Board of Education goals

Notes on Alaska statutes (Title 14) that relate to school performance.

1. The minimum school year is 180 days (including six named holidays and up to ten days for teacher in-service), and the minimum school day is four hours for primary grades and five hours for all others. Exceptions may be allowed by the commissioner.

2. Children ages 6 to 20 (or until completion of the 12th grade) are entitled to attend public schools; children who are five years old may attend kindergarten. Attendance is compulsory between the ages of 7 and 16, but there are eleven kinds of exceptions. Suspensions or expulsions are allowed under certain conditions.

3. Duties of the Department of Education include generally supervising schools (including pre-elementary schools), studying needs and making recommendations, providing assistance to school boards and personnel, prescribing a minimum course of study, and accrediting schools which meet accreditation standards established by the department.

4. The department has the power to operate schools and to contract to provide services to school districts. (The power to "exercise disapproval" over REAA decisions (in Sec. 14.07.030) is a technical error arising out of changes made to the statutes. It will be proposed for correction by the Revisor of Statutes.)

5. Funding for school districts is fixed by definitions of instructional units, special units (bilingual, special education, vocational education), level of federal impact aid and its disparity test, area cost differentials, the value assigned to each instructional unit, and several other factors.

6. The State Board is required to compel all districts to adopt affirmative action programs for equal employment and educational opportunity.

7. With two unimportant exceptions, only persons holding baccalaureate degrees will be allowed (by the statutes) to teach in the public schools; other requirements may be imposed by the department.

8. Certificates issued to persons authorized to teach may be revoked by the commissioner or the Professional Teaching Practices Commission (PTPC) only for reasons of immorality, incompetence, noncompliance with school laws, or upon a finding by the PTPC of ethical, professional, or contractual obligations.

9. Teachers acquire tenure rights by having been employed two years by a district and are re-employed the following year. Once tenured, a teacher will be retained unless notified by March 16 for the coming year.

10. All school boards are required to negotiate with their certificated employees pertaining to their employment and fulfillment of their professional duties. REAA's may join together for such negotiations.

11. Districts are required to provide special education to exceptional children, to evaluate them, to consult with their parents, and to develop individualized education plans for each of them.

12. A health education specialist is to be employed in the department and districts are encouraged to conduct health education programs.

13. Districts are required to establish bilingual-bicultural education programs in schools having eight or more persons of limited English-speaking ability and whose primary language is other than English.

14. Requirements imposed by federal law to receive federal funds for vocational education are accepted by the State.

15. The State library will undertake to provide library services directly to areas lacking independent library units.

16. State funds may not be paid to a district or teacher failing to comply with law or with Department of Education regulations.

17. District school boards are required to provide "an educational program" for each school age child and to establish a process for the review of textbooks and other materials.

18. REAA school boards are required to provide "an educational program" for each school age child, develop a philsophy of education, principles and goals for its schools, establish a process for review of textbooks and other materials, and employ persons to carry out schooling activities. Among other things, they are empowered to adopt policies and procedures for the operation of their districts.

19. The establishment of regional resource centers is authorized to provide a variety of specialized services (such as fiscal, diagnostic, staff development, school board member training, and media) to participating districts.

---------- Comments----------

a. All of the foregoing is meant as partial background to the issue of who is responsible for the quality of a school's performance. A review of regulations of the Department of Education will provide further background.

b. I have omitted hundreds of pages of statutes that have a lesser role in school performance -- transportation of pupils, school construction, teachers' retirement-- but I think I have identified the principal provisions.

c. Let me try a summary of major provisions I have cited by reciting what the statutes do prescribe:

- who is to attend and what the duration will be;
- who will be allowed to teach and how the terms of their employment will be arrived at;
- on what bases State funds will be allocated among the districts of the state;
- that, under certain conditions, vocational education, bilingual/bicultural, and special education programs will be afforded;
- that the Department of Education will employ a health educator;
- that the department will prescribe a minimum course of study and accredit schools which meet accreditation standards;
- that each district will provide an educational program;
- that each district will have an affirmative action program; and
- that the department will exercise general oversight of the schools, make recommendations for improvements, and provide assistance to districts;

d. I suppose every reader might compile a different list of what is not in the statutes, but mine would start with the omission of any statement of the purpose or goals of schooling or any definition of what the school program should consist of for most students. Only three kinds of programs are prescribed in the statutes; though each is important, none is classified as a basic skill.

e. I will comment on the subjects of a minimum course of study and accreditation in a separate memorandum.

Bob Arnold 9/23/88

Comments on the performance of Mt. Edgecumbe High School based on student and parent views and test scores.

Education experts tell us that achievement tests alone cannot tell us what we need to know to assess school performance -- things like whether students enjoy school and are engaged and motivated to learn. If the undivided judgment of more than a third of the students at Mt. Edgecumbe is generally representative of the whole group, the boarding high school passes that kind of test of school performance.

About 70 students met with the State Board of Education this week to tell them what was right and what was wrong with their school. But the two dozen or so who spoke to the board found little to criticize. One asked for a football program, another for music, and another for more vocational programs. "The worst thing," one said, " is having the school year end."

But what the board did hear from student after student in its hour-and-a-half meeting was that Mt. Edgecumbe was the best place to learn and to grow in confidence in dealing with the future. Among other things, the students said:

- "Welcome to the best school in Alaska. We're all family here."
- "Teachers here encourage us to learn to do this or that...I mean I've never seen such encouragement."
- "You live and breathe academics here."
- "Being here has helped me know I can go to college."
- "I've been in eight or nine schools and I've never had the feeling of family and security I have here."
- "What do I think? I've never been so happy in my life."
- "Though it starts with a push from the teachers, pretty soon it's us pushing ourselves; we get used to the idea of working on our studies."
- "There is no question that it is academically tougher here than most places."
- "In [my last school] the teacher told me I was stupid; I now get an 'A' in geometry."
- "I was an awful student until I came here. I had a 1.5 g.p.a. [in my last school] and now I'm a 3.7"

Former Education Secretary William Bennett, with his calls for an ethos of achievement in each school, would surely have loved to be present at this meeting. What the students were applauding is an academic program of seven classes daily with no study halls and few electives; a 24-unit graduation requirement; enrichment classes offered only after school and on Saturdays; and mandatory study halls in the afternoon and evening for those who need more time to learn.

Another approach to assessing school performance is to obtain the views of parents, and Mt. Edgecumbe has done so. This past summer, about half the school's parents replied to a questionnaire, and gave the school good to excellent marks on everything but food service. On the open-ended questions, parents praised the attitude of the staff, the content of the curriculum, and the positive changes in their sons and daughters; they also complained that discipline was too strict (expulsion for substance abuse), that students participated too little in shaping the rules, and that a broadening of the program was needed. A fuller picture is contained in the enclosure.

The conventional means of estimating school performance is the standardized test, and by this measure, Mt. Edgecumbe is slightly above the national average on the basis of composite scores. Although the composite scores the first year were in the 20th and 30th percentile range, Superintendent Larrae Rocheleau points out that there have been changes in the composition of the student body, and he cautions against giving too much meaning to the change in scores.

----------Notes and comments----------

a. In this, the fourth year of operation as a state boarding school, Mt. Edgecumbe enrolls 193 students, most of them from the rural areas. About 85 percent are Alaska Natives. Under the law enacted last session, preference must be given to "students currently enrolled at the boarding school and to students whose educational, emotional, or family requirements warrant attendance in a domiciliary environment."

b. Mt. Edgecumbe's instructional program is now funded under the Foundation formula, but funds for other expenses must be obtained as line items in the budget. Total cost this year is more than $14,000 per pupil, higher than the $11,159 average of the REAA's, but lower than several of them.

c. Are there implications for day schools in the experience of this boarding school? I think there are several.

c. In the judgment of Superintendent Rocheleau, summer use of the boarding school for other learners would make good sense, and I agree.

Bob Arnold 9/29/88

STATE OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
MT. EDGECUMBE HIGH SCHOOL

STEVE COWPER, GOVERNOR

1297 SEWARD AVENUE
SITKA, ALASKA 99835-9438
PHONE: (907) 966-2201

August 18, 1988
0423A

PARENT REPORT CARD RESULTS
MT. EDGECUMBE HIGH SCHOOL

Parents "Grade" Mt. Edgecumbe High School's Program:

In the summer of 1988, survey forms were sent to parents of those Mt. Edgecumbe High School students who stated they would be returning to MEHS in the fall of 1988. One hundred nine forms were mailed and parents of approximately 50 students (about a 46% return rate) responded.

In one section of the "Parent Report Card," parents were asked to rate 16 items by checking one of the following categories - Excellent, Good, Average, Unsatisfactory, or No Opinion. Results were compiled using a numbered rating system assigning 4 points for "Excellent," 3 for "Good," 2 for "Average," 1 for "Unsatisfactory," and 0 for "No Opinion".

Enclosed is a summary of the items and how they ranked. The five items receiving the highest rating are: reporting system for grades, teachers, administration, curriculum in relation to child's needs, and child's attitude toward school. The lowest five include: food service, communication between home and school, rules and regulations, extra curricular activities, and facilities.

Also attached are sample comments parents made to five open ended questions asked on the survey.

"PARENTS - HOW WOULD YOU RATE MT. EDGECUMBE HIGH SCHOOL'S PERFORMANCE IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS"
8/18/88

Excellent = 4.0 Rating
Good = 3.0 Rating
Average = 2.0 Rating
Unsatisfactory=1.0 Rating

ITEM RANKED	RATING	RANK
MEHS'S student progress reports	3.57	1
Teaching staff	3.49	2
Administration	3.49	2
Curriculum	3.43	4
Student's attitude and enthusiasm for school	3.42	5
Learning materials	3.41	6
Discipline at MEHS	3.40	7
Instructional methods	3.39	8
Pupil-Teacher ratio	3.39	8
Citizenship education	3.39	8
Guidance and counseling services	3.31	11
Facilities	3.23	12
Extra-curricular activities	3.22	13
Rules and regulations at MEHS	3.21	14
Communications-exchange of information between home and school	3.06	15
Food service	2.45	16

Parent Report Card Comments

Question: 1. What do you appreciate most about Mt. Edgecumbe High School?

Typical Responses:

-- "The interest taken in the students. The willingness to work with a bright but difficult child and to lead and guide her to a future that looks increasingly good. Without Mt. Edgecumbe she would be a high school dropout on her way to life failure."

-- "I like the curriculum activities . . . ."

-- "The excellent curriculum and sports activities. Students graduating from Edgecumbe have the skills to go on to college and succeed."

-- "It has helped my son to grow up and have a good attitude about himself."

-- "The entire staff! I am most pleased as to how the dormitory 'mothers' relate to all those teenagers. It takes special people for that job."

-- "My daughter is more sure of herself now she has attended MEHS. I appreciate the school for teaching our daughter to be honest with herself and parents and family."

-- "Its existence is giving children in remote logging camps such as ours the opportunity to interact academically and socially with different kids in a boarding school situation where they become semi-independent. We like the 'Beacon Home,' school newspaper, and notes from teachers."

-- "The fact that it exists! Provides an opportunity for my child to get an excellent education she wouldn't otherwise get. The hard work and interest shown by teachers, administration, and staff."

-- "The good education!"

-- "The fact that my daughter learned a lot more about other people and customs, travel, and leadership schooling. Something she could not get at home."

-- "My son's increase in math scores achievement."

-- "MEHS has given my daughter a better outlook on life. She matured while away in school."

Question: 1

-- "For my child to go see another environment and learn other Native cultures other than his own."

-- "How my daughter became a young lady."

-- "I appreciate the different variety of classes you offer there."

-- "The quality of education and the efforts of some outstanding individual teachers . . . . to help our son through a tough junior year."

-- "Quality of the education and control over students."

-- "The interest the teachers and administrators take on kids and encouraging them to do their best."

-- "The excellent curriculum, teachers, good discipline policy."

-- "I appreciate the effect it has had on my daughter. I doubt that she would have stayed in high school had she continued at home. I am very enthusiastic about MEHS."

Question 2: What is the most pressing problem facing Mt. Edgecumbe High School?

Typical Responses:

-- "I would guess funding and the commitment of future governors and legislators."

-- "There are not enough dormitories for all the the students that would like to go to school there."

-- "Understanding family wishes."

-- "I see no problem with MEHS. I just wish our high schools all over put out the quality of teaching MEHS puts forth for their students."

-- "Facility upgrade. Less 'white institutional walls, etc.'. Inclusion of the arts in curriculum. No snuff, fear of things stolen, no drugs, no damage to private property."

-- "The possibility of ever losing state funding to operate the school."

-- "Its sorta far and it really gets expensive for traveling. But it is worth it."

-- "Probably money."

-- "In my opinion the school will have greater difficulty in future years securing funds to operate - not only due to declining dollars, but because it will be hard to justify sending students away from home when they can go to school within or near their communities."

-- "Alaska economy - ability to stay open."

-- "The food"

-- "Homesickness, cranky dorm maids, (they should have better attitude).

-- "To maintain a balance in the school of students that are varied in culture, race, academics and athletics - and keeping things running as smoothly as possible."

-- "The rules and regulations in dorm. Dorm staff needs improvement. Some rules just do not make sense."

Question 3. Are there areas of the school program that should receive less emphasis?

Typical Responses:

-- "Nothing that I know of. You all are doing one terrific job."

-- "I assume you do the best for the most students with what you have."

-- "Discipline - more ownership in environment and rules by kids."

-- "No, I believe that everything should receive the same amount of emphasis."

-- "While I appreciate strong discipline, our son has often said he thought last year was too strict."

-- "No!"

-- "No, not at all, I like it as it is."

-- "Attendance at sports activities."

-- "The Chinese and Japanese cultures."

Question 4: Are there areas of the school program that should receive greater emphasis?

-- "I think some practical living skills such as shop machines, etc. would be a good addition as an alternative. I don't really want you to take anything out."

-- "Like I said, I like it how it is."

-- "No, I believe that everything should receive the same amount of emphasis."

-- "The arts - drama, crafts, drawing, etc."

-- "The school cafeteria - food service, all students and most visiting adults feel the food is less than acceptable. Maybe new cooks, more spices -- something to make the food taste better."

-- "SAT and ACT preparation. Perhaps more college prep type counseling. Could MEHS have a school band?"

-- "Business classes, computers, career classes."

-- "A program to study Alaska Native cultures and the Alaska Native Land Claims Settlement Act and recent 1991 amendment."

-- "There is a pressing need to offer drug and alcohol counseling to students. I do not agree with Edgecumbe's policy to expel students for using and abusing alcohol/drugs without first trying to get these students help. With proper intervention students' whole futures may be saved."

-- "Possibly more extra curricular activities - clubs, a swimming pool on campus would be great . . .

-- "More outside activities - field trips, tour boats around the area."

-- "Yes, when my daughter is showing signs of bad grades early in the semester, cut no slack make her show improvement early in the semester not in the end."

-- "Entertain the students more."

-- "Band ?!"

Question 4

-- "Individual tutoring and/or counseling in areas where students need extra help. Example - English, study skills."

-- "College/vocational prep should be emphasized and encouraged."

Parent Report Card
Comments

Question 5: Additional comments you would like to make for our consideration in the improvement of our school.

Typical Responses:

-- "The biggest complaint I hear from my son is the school and dorm administrators do not listen to student's concerns, recommendations, and suggestions. If you give student's an opportunity to participate in setting rules/regulations you will find they take ownership which leads to responsibility."

-- "I think you're doing just fine and keep up the good work. Am happy my child has this chance in her lifetime for this great experience."

-- "More school activities."

-- "As it is I think you people there are doing a great job of teaching our children for a better education."

-- "Can't wait for the new building."

-- "It would be nice if arts and vocational training were available but I realize the financial limitations."

-- "Definite need for a music program."

-- "The only thing we'd like changed is the report card system. Since parent/teacher conferences aren't possible, it would be nice to have a short note from each instructor outlining the student's strengths, weaknesses, and suggestions for improvement."

-- "I am proud to have my daughter attend Mt. Edgecumbe High School. No improvement needed -- keep up the good work. Bless you all."

-- "Students should have input in choosing their extended family and roommates, more recognition for achievements, more issues of Channel Light . . . . Last but not least, I would like to express my thanks and appreciation for the great (and sometimes thankless) job that's being done by everyone involved with MEHS. I am proud of the MEHS family and proud to be part of it."

-- "Keep on growing and never stop."

-- "None at all, all is fine."

-- "Do you have a school board at Edgecumbe? If so is it statewide or just from Sitka?"

Extracts from Power On! New Tools for Teaching and Learning, Congress of the United States Office of Technology Assessment, Washington, D. C., September, 1988, 246 pages.

---

1. Hundreds of studies...reveal that elementary level students who received brief daily CAI [computer-assisted instruction] as a suppplement to instruction showed gains equivalent to 1 to 8 months of instruction over their peers who received traditional instruction only.... CAI is more effective at raising achievement among low-achieving students than for average or high-achieving students. [They also learn faster, their attendance improves, and they are more motivated.]

2. [Low achieving children use the computer mostly for drill and practice, but] they can also benefit from instruction that that develops their higher cognitive abilities.... [This is shown by the Higher Order Thinking Skills program in which] Chapter 1 students...showed substantially greater gains on standardized tests when compared with the national average.

3. MATH. After 10 hours of instruction [with the Geometry Tutor], all students were able to solve problems that their teachers considered too difficult to assign to their classes. In fact, a student who had almost failed geometry was successful...

4. PROGRAMMING. The effects of using programming to teach mathematics at the elementary and middle school level are mixed.... [and the effects of using programming to develop thinking abilities] are limited and mixed.

5. SCIENCE. High school students working with computer simulations to teach them to solve force and motion problems using Newton's laws of motion learned significantly more than students who did not use the program.

6. SCIENCE. A number of studies of MBLs [microcomputer based laboratories] indicate that students using MBLs grasp complex scientific concepts at a deeper level of understanding than when MBLs are not used.

7. WRITING SKILLS. Studies have shown that mainstream and special students who used the word processor as a supplement to writing instruction have made significant gains in writing ability.

8. GRAPHING. Results of studies where students use the computer to develop graphing skills are more consistently positive than any other area of computer use.

9. READING. In a study of 108 low-achieving, poor black children, it was found that students who used two reading programs outperformed a control group in both accuracy and efficiency of decoding and recognition.... they gained over 1 year on standardized tests -- but students who were already adequate in their decoding skills did not show any changes.

10. [Studies suggest that the use of computer technology can be cost effective, but studies show mixed results. For example: One study showed CAI to produce positive gains for disadvantaged pupils and to be cost-effective; another showed CAI to be cost-effective, but less so than reducing class size and much less so than peer-tutoring.]

11. [A careful analysis of math instruction in a Canadian elementary school showed] third and fourth graders who used CAI experienced almost twice the gain of their peers who had traditional instruction; and while the cost per student was higher for CAI ...the cost per unit of effectiveness was significantly lower.

12. Educators and educational researchers consistently cite one factor as central to the full development of technology's use in the schools -- the classroom teacher. [Some findings:]

-- ... only half of the Nation's teachers report they used computers in instruction.

-- Few teachers have found ways to exploit the enormous potential...

-- Most teachers want to use technology.

-- The process by which teachers appropriate technology is more complex than that by which teachers adopt other changes.

-- The very opportunities opened by the computer can create more work for the teacher, making the job harder initially.

-- Any further investment in technology for education must factor in teacher training and support...

13. SOFTWARE. ILSs [Integrated Learning Systems] are packaged to span part or all of a curriculum (for example, fourth to sixth grade arithmetic or K-6 language arts) and typically run on networked systems of microcomputers....they make fewer demands on teachers than do individual programs that treat small sections of the curriculum. [They are overlaid by sophisticated management systems.]

The alternative...is the use of floppy disc-based programs that typically cost under $50 and address specific

topics or concepts rather than an entire curriculum. There are now over 10,000 such software titles available covering the major school subjects and many of the minor subjects...

----------Notes and comments----------

a. The selections I have made from this book are meant to tell at least these things: computers are instructionally effective, but there are qualifiers of several kinds; one such is that teachers be provided computer education themselves, not simply be handed a computer and invited to use it; a wide range of software is available for most subjects; and though the software varies in what it promises to do, several agencies are actively engaged in evaluation.

b. A computer-supported writing curriculum for Native Americans who are not proficient in English, grades 4-12, was developed by the Yukon-Koyukuk School District. The program, APEL, has won state and federal awards for excellence. The district, now offering training to other districts, reports that "twelfth grade students in the Yukon-Koyukuk district gained 41 percentile points on the ITBS Level 18 Written Expression sub-test from 1981 to 1986." (Emphasis supplied.)

c. The Department of Education has completed its 1988 survey of computer/technology, and reports (on the basis of 51 districts responding) that 8,420 computers (87 percent) are used for instruction. Lab or class time per week ranges widely among the districts, with a high of 600 minutes in grades K-3 (St. Mary's) and a high of 1000 minutes in grades 7-8 (Adak).

As the attachment shows, the format employed in gathering data on instructional uses of computers does not allow me to generalize about the extent to which computers are used in teaching basic skills or in enhancing learning in specific content areas such as language arts, mathematics, or science.

Asked about their most urgent needs, 22 districts identified staff training, 16 said additional or updated hardware, and 11 said new or updated software. Other needs included computer coordinators, integration of computers with other subjects, and "longer days to offer more courses."

All districts called for an expanded role for the Department of Education in computer technology issues.

d. In September, the Anchorage district installed a 30-station Integrated Learning System (ILS) lab in Mountain View school that will provide most children up to 30 minutes a day at a computer terminal connected by network to a compact disc player. The disc contains about 1800 lessons in reading, language arts, and mathematics. Last week, the district decided to purchase 50 computers for students to take home to allow them to continue their studies in these basic skill areas. Earlier this year, the same system (ECS) was installed in Akiak and Akiachak schools in the Yupiit REAA.

e. Based upon the promise (among other things) of computer technology to deliver individualized, self-paced learning, provide instant feedback to learners, and allow them to experience repeated success, together with the experiences of my own children, I report to you that I read this report and a dozen other articles on the subject with a point of view.

This is not a rich background of knowledge, admittedly, but I am convinced that that effective use of computer technology can contribute very importantly to helping all children learn more than they are now learning in schools. Given the investments made by school districts in Alaska so far, superintendents must have reached a similar conclusion.

But with the exception of the districts noted above and a few others, I have seen little conviction expressed in testimony or in replies of superintendents to our questionnaire that computer technology can make a difference. I don't know why.

It may be, given the number of districts saying their urgent needs are for staff development and other kinds of help, that acquisition of equipment has raced ahead of the abilities of districts to employ the technology effectively. Fewer than half have developed a philosophy for computer/technology education, which one would think would precede equipment purchases.

Such planning was one of the recommendations urged upon states by the National Governors' Association in 1986 in their report, Time for Results. In that report, the group also urged, among other things, that states provide appropriate technology education to teachers in their curriculum areas, provide technical assistance to school districts, and encourage experimentation with technology to allow restructuring of schools to increase productivity and learning.

In 1988, the NGA reported that, despite an upsurge of activity in this area and some major steps being taken by states, few are actively integrating technology into their education reform agendas. The NGA also cautioned that the promise of technology won't be realized without teacher training. Without it, "purchase of computers and of software is a waste."

In Alaska, the Department of Education has only one and one-half postions devoted to computer technology and distance learning.

f. As with other subjects, I am hopeful that we can obtain further knowledge and advice on all aspect of computer technology in the schools from parents and educators at our hearings.

Bob Arnold 10/4/88

Extracts from Dropouts in America: Enough is Known for Action, Institute for Educational Leadership, Washington, D.C., March 1987, 69 pages.

THREE PRIMARY THEMES

1. ...no single approach or strategy will prove effective for all children and adolescents in difficulty... efforts to intervene on their behalf must respond to their distinct and varied needs.

2. ...the need [is] to respond to a youngster's entire life [requiring integration of social services and systems].

3. ...most poor youngsters at risk suffer from a devastating crisis of competence. [They must be persuaded that] they can produce and perform in school and on the job.

WHO DROPS OUT AND WHY

1. The General Accounting Officer reports that, in 1985, 4.3 million 16-24 year olds dropped out -- 13 percent of that age group. [Almost one in five was a minority person; males outnumbered females.]

2. The High School and Beyond study (1980) showed that "On every reasonable indicator of 'hardship' -- low income, low skill wage, limited educational background -- the disadvantaged respondents (17 percent) were three times more likely to be school dropouts than the advantaged (5 percent).

3. Students report many reasons for dropping out -- poor grades, dislike for school, alienation from peers, marriage or pregnancy, and employment.

4. Consideration of some of the major personal and institutional conditions that forshadow the decision to drop out produces one theme that permeates...the deeply ingrained sense of personal failure, of individual worthlessness.

5. Behind in grade level. [A Chicago study] found that overage students, even if reading at higher levels than their normal aged peers, are 7 to 10 percent more likely to drop out... Flunking a grade in school has multiple effects. Students held back a grade are up to 4 times more likely to drop out than those who are not. The reason is simple: students hate being "too old" for the class.

6. Push-outs. [Some administrators, wanting to be rid of overage "troublemakers," expel for truancy or other reasons when they can.]

7. Academic performance. Study after study has documented

the low reading, writing, math, science, speaking/listening, and reasoning abilities of potential and actual dropouts... with early detection more students could have been helped.

8. Dislike of school. This vague explanation given by many dropouts cuts across nearly all others. Just over one-third of High School and Beyond dropouts cited this reason, males more often than females.

9. Detention and suspension. In 1985, studies by two national panels...reported that most high school suspensions are for non-threatening behavior... -- "defiance of authority," followed by "chronic tardiness," "chronic absence," and "profanity or vulgarity." The negative effect of repeated suspensions, the panels concluded, is severe. Not only are suspensions ineffective in encouraging good discipline, but they keep students out of class and alienate them from school.

10. Pregnancy. Four out of five girls who become pregnant in high school drop out as compared to less than 10 percent of those who are childless. Pregnancy is the most common reason females leave school.

11. Welfare. Dropouts are three times more likely than high school graduates to come from families that receive welfare.

12. Attractiveness of work. ...most studies show that regardless of how badly youngsters have fared in school, they are strongly motivated to succeed in the workplace. These studies show that these youngsters want to work and do work when opportunities are available.

13. Attraction of military service. In recent years, up to a third of new enrollees in our Armed Services have not completed high school. Unfortunately, however, nearly half of those who entered the Army in 1981 without high school diplomas were not thought capable of completing their first tour of duty.

14. Vocational programs. Vocational program dropout rates are higher than in academic programs.

15. Other. [Other factors contributing to dropouts appear to be emotional problems, misdiagnosis as "learning disabled," and English language difficulties.]

DROPOUT PREVENTION

16. Early school years.

- ...keeping students back a grade in primary school makes less sense than providing the special services the student needs to perform at grade level.

- Many primary schools...are reorganizing their classes into multi-age groupings [avoiding] the stigma of overage.

- [Several states] provide reimbursement to local school districts that run effective parent education classes, early detection screening, and remedial programs for high risk 1-to-4 year olds.

- A special unit should be established within elementary schools with the responsibility to identify early warnings of school failure.

17. High school: approaches to dropout prevention.

- mentorship and intensive, sustained counseling directed toward the troubled youngster;

- an array of social services, including health care, family planning education, and infant care facilities for the adolescent mother;

- concentrated remediation using individualized instruction [such as CAI] and competency based criteria;

- an effective school-business collaboration that provides ongoing access to the mainstream economy;

- improved incentives;

- year-round schools;

- heightened accountability for dropouts at all levels of the public education system;

- involvement of parents and community organizations in dropout prevention.

18. [Two approaches to providing a broad range of services are a statewide services corporation or a community based non-profit organization.]

----------Notes and Comments----------

a. Owing to lack of an agreed upon definition and other factors, what data there are on numbers of dropouts are usually in conflict with other data. The U. S. Department of Education's dropout estimate (1987) was implied by the graduation rate which it calculated to be 71.5 percent in the nation and 68.3 percent in Alaska.

b. The Alaska Department of Education is currently developing a standard for defining dropouts and a reporting system, and exploring what remedial actions ought to be proposed.

c. A study of early school leavers in the Juneau district in

1985-86 concluded that the dropout rate was somewhat less than 8 percent. Of the 105 dropouts, 42 were Alaska Natives and 2 were Black. Three fourths of the dropouts left when they were in the 9th/10th/11th grades. Forty one percent of the early leavers scored above the national average on standardized tests, and some of them were toward the higher end of the scale.

Of the 77 dropouts interviewed, about two-thirds "were disenchanted or had feelings of alienation when they withdrew from school." Many of the students left early upon "the realization that they lacked credits to complete school with their peers..." More than one-third said nothing could have kept them in school, but nearly as many said counseling and guidance could have kept them in school.

Of those interviewed, about a third cited personal problems (family, pregnancy, drugs) as the reason for leaving school and almost as many cited school problems (discipline, grades and credits, absenteeism); others cited lack of motivation, employment, GED, and other reasons.

d. The Native Education Program at Fairbanks calculates the Native dropout/failure rate among seniors there to be 20 percent in 1985-86, a marked improvement over the 42 percent of the preceding year.

e. As noted in an earlier memorandum, the Anchorage district estimates its overall dropout rate at about 15 percent and its Native dropout rate at 28 percent.

f. Senator Duncan of this committee introduced a bill in the last session to provide grants to encourage districts to undertake innovative programs to keep youth in school and to bring dropouts back. It represents a promising approach that I think the committee will want to consider.

g. The problem of dropouts is now more often described as part of the larger problem of students-at-risk, with policy makers looking not only to the high schools to find remedies, but to elementary schools to identify those who may become dropouts and to take appropriate actions.

I agree with the need for elementary schools to take early action, but I worry about yet another classification that may further stigmatize those it is expected to benefit. With resolution on the part of the school to do all that it can to assure that all children are learning and growing in their sense of worth, a school will be reducing the likelihood its pupils will become dropouts. Can a school provide tutoring and remedial coursework, avoid retention and other such practices, and reach out to parents without giving a new label to a group of students? Or is such categorizing required for a state to provide funding where it is needed?

Bob Arnold 10/6/88

Summary of presentations made at this committee's hearing in Juneau, October 11, 1988.

The hearing was opened at 7:10 p.m. by Chairman Willie Hensley, with Senators Johne Binkley and Jim Duncan also in attendance. Senator Ken Fanning participated by teleconference from Yakutat.

Education Commissioner William Demmert told the committee that, even though Alaska scores are generally above the national average, districts with predominantly Native populations are not achieving at satisfactory levels; and in the urban areas, Natives constitute the highest percentage of dropouts. The issues are complex, he said, and will require academic, social, and economic solutions, but by relying upon research evidence in conducting their school programs, school districts can make progress. He urged, as priorities for the committee, creation of competitive funding projects to produce improved quality in parenting/early childhood programs and to help selected districts reorganize language K-4 programs; development of collaborative programs with the university for staff training, with social service agencies to address social issues, and with business and industry to build pilot or model programs; and development of research capabilities to meet Alaska needs. (See attachment).

Public broadcasting executive director Charles Northrip told the committee that public television resources were greatly underutilized in education, partly owing to the separation of functions since Executive Order 50 was adopted in 1981, a separation that ought to be reconsidered. Instruction and informal education on a wide range of subjects on produced series should be taking place, as should the use of live interactive video and cassette packages of PTV series. But many of the uses would only be possible with the utilization of a system like the Rural Alaska Television Network.

The manager of education services for the Tlingit-Haida Central Council, Emma Widmark, said her chief concerns for improvement are in provision of Native role models in schools, teachers having cultural awareness, support services (probably including parents), and programs that focus on the potential of learners, not their deficits.

Neil Bledsoe, the director of alternative programs at the Juneau-Douglas High School, described several such programs, each of which has somewhat different attributes and student composition. The programs are characterized by flexible scheduling, self contained learning, and job training and work experience. The district is working at how it might provide day care to 28 teenage mothers who want to be in school.

Gail Parson, a teacher at one of the programs -- Project 2000 -- said it is a community of 40 with one teacher for a four-hour block that allows freedom in planning and conducting the course of study, and that is sufficiently long to build a sense of community among its members. She said the "kids are blossoming."

Seven students from the alternative programs -- most of them from Project 2000 -- spoke with candor of their past involvement with drugs and alcohol, of their absenteeism, and of their failures in school before being enrolled in the project. Among other things, they told of earning higher grades, attending regularly, building a sense of self-worth, learning at their own pace, and of building a relationship with the teacher and other students. More than one said, "We are a family."

Yakutat elementary school principal Jerry Schoenberger advised the committee to encourage local initiative, saying that the programs that really work are developed locally.

The supervisor for Juneau Indian Studies, Ronalda Cadiente, showed the committee curriculum guides for the Indian studies program, and described the importance of such studies to Natives and non-Natives alike. She said the use of the materials sometimes exposes adverse feelings, and that she knows changes in attitude will take time. Administrative support is critical, she said.

Indian studies teacher Cris Hill said among the problems in implementing the program is that she is dependent upon invitations of teachers to make presentations. Some evaluations from students are very troubling, she said, because they often represent underlying attitudes. Her hope is that the program will help Native children face others without being confronted by negative stereotypes.

Parent David Marshall, a seven year resident of a western REAA, recommended that the Department of Education provide training to school board members to prevent intimidation by superintendents, assure that parent advisory committees are effective, evaluate the quality of schooling in districts, and report on complaints about districts and the department's response to them. He also urged the legislature to provide for student evaluation of school programs and to establish a quota system to increase the number of Native teachers in villages.

Mt. Edgecumbe superintendent Larrae Rocheleau said students at his school take seven classes a day, with other coursework that is not basic taken after school. A problem is finding teachers who will work afternoons, evenings, and weekends, he said. Despite the demands for achievement placed upon the students, he had to turn 170 applicants away.

Former teacher Paul Sincic told of school failures in the Juneau district, Thorne Bay, and Karluk.

A Juneau parent, Christy Moeller, urged the committee to do what it could to reduce class size in the lower grades, pointing out that by doing so, Texas had produced substantial achievement gains and increased parental involvement.

Nancy Byers, a teacher formerly at Gambell, recommended to the committee that, where appropriate, the first years of instruction be in the child's Native language, that teachers be trained in English as a Second Language techniques, and that provision be made to allow communities and school faculties to plan together.

Chairman Hensley adjourned the hearing at 11:05 p.m.

Bob Arnold
10/12/88

[In a facsimilie message to the hearing, Sitka Community Association social worker Georgina Kacyon said the attendance policy of the Sitka schools contributes to the dropout problem there. With twelve absences, she said, a student fails a class and sees no point in continuing in school. She said she believes an attendance policy is needed, but the result of the current one is that several 9th graders are now repeating the grade. She said Sitka does not have an alternative program.]

[In a letter to the committee, Juneau parent Sylvia Dean said she is involved in public and private schools and is currently teaching home school, and that the relationship between the parent, child, and teacher is the key. She said parents must be welcomed into the learning process and encouraged to participate.]

Notes on the role of broadcasting in instruction in Alaska, based on a memorandum from the Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission, September 16, 1988; "The Future of State-Supported Broadcasting in Alaska," Larry L. Pearson, 1987; "A Report to the Alaska Legislature in Response to Intent Language regarding Telecommunications in the FY88 Operating Budget," December, 1987, and a review of RATNET minutes, 1986-1988.

PUBLIC BROADCASTING

1. In FY 1989, the State appropriation for public television station operation is about $2.5 million; these funds, supplemented by other funds, are used for the operation of four PTV stations serving about 80 percent of Alaska's population. Three stations are controlled by locally-elected boards; the fourth is operated by the University at Fairbanks.

2. For 25 years instructional television has been shown to be effective in presenting content of specific courses, in providing experiences not otherwise available, and in motivating students to learn.

2. No instructional television is carried in Juneau; Bethel carries 2 1/2 hours weekly, Fairbanks carries almost 5 hours weekly, and Anchorage carries 25 hours. Community-controlled stations are required by regulation to provide free time for instructional programming provided by local schools.

3. Nine programs for children and youth are available to stations for out of school viewing this year. In addition to the well-known programs such as "Sesame Street," they include programs to stimulate enthusiasm for learning reading ("Reading Rainbow"), for mathematics and problem solving ("Square One TV"), and for science and technology ("3-2-1 Contact"); other programs are dramatic works or discussions dealing with issues facing pre-teens and adolescents.

4. General PTV programming is often suitable as a supplement to classroom instruction in science, history, government, and other subjects. It can be the subject of homework or, when allowed, be taped for classroom use. Print materials are available for many such programs.

5. Alaska's 15 public radio stations (supported by state appropriations of about $4 million) are sources of information and news for their listeners, but carry no instructional programming. Several stations carry programs in languages other than English.

6. Elsewhere in America, telecommunications technology is widely and effectively employed in addressing issues of

schooling -- teacher in-service training, interactive coursework for students at remote locations, teleconferences, and so on. Such uses were made of the LearnAlaska network until funding for its operation was deleted in 1986.

7. The Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission is located (by law) within the Department of Administration. The nine members of the commission are appointed by the governor for five-year terms.

THE RURAL ALASKA TELEVISION NETWORK

8. During this fiscal year, the State appropriation for the Rural Alaska Television Network (RATNet) is about $2.6 million. Of this amount, $2.2 million is payment to Alascom for the use of its satellite and ground stations.

9. RATNet provides television service to 248 communities, 121 of which have no other television service (about 18,000 persons), and 41 of which have no radio service (about 4,400 persons).

10. Progamming on RATNet is preponderantly commercial television -- news, weather, sports, and entertainment. It does, however, carry a few PTV programs such as "Sesame Street," "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood," and "3-2-1 Contact." (Two recent weekly schedules are attached.)

11. There is virtually no instructional use made of RATNet during days or evenings, even though the legislative intent (FY 1987) was that "RATNet and Learn/Alaska be combined on one statewide network managed by the Department of Administration." In 1987, the consultant to the House committee on telecommunications said the RATNet directors refused to return to the pre-Learn/Alaska format of daytime instructional programming and evening entertainment. He said, "...they have considered instructional programs during the day on a case by case basis and have expressed unwillingness to make a regular day-time slot available for instructional programs."

12. RATNet's policy guideline on this subject is that "Instructional programming is considered to be consistent in quality with network programming and will be assigned on a time slot basis."

14. Currently, the Department of Education uses the satellite for transmission of programs between the hours of 2:00 a.m. and 4:00 a.m. (for eight weeks each year) for recording by school districts for their later use. The department also has been authorized to use five hours this year for "Talkback," special presentations affording students the opportunity to ask questions.

13. The department's request for one hour daily, four days a week, for transmission of a course in Japanese for up to 15 districts for this school year was rejected by the RATNet board.

14. RATNet programming is determined by a 17-member board made up of 12 representatives of Native non-profit corporations, two appointees of the governor, and one representative each from the Department of Education, public broadcasting, and the University of Alaska. There are no fixed terms.

----------Comments----------

a. Given the achievement levels that are implied by test scores in many rural areas, and the existing demands upon teachers and schools, I think it is important to consider whether and how State-supported broadcasting capabilities should be employed to assist what State-supported schools are seeking to do, and that is the reason I prepared this summary.

b. Here are some of the things that broadcast television can do in support of schooling goals:

- Extend the school day for the student without extending the school day for the teacher;
- Carry instructional programming that small school faculties are unable to offer;
- Present information at home that would be useful to both parents and students (e.g., drugs, alcohol, and other health information);
- Present information for parents as parents; and
- Provide in-service education for teachers.

c. Broadcast radio can also be useful in instructional programs, perhaps especially in language arts. In the communities where stations exist, high school students could also use them as places of learning.

d. I have written the president of RATNet, asking what criteria are used in making program decisions, and I will share his reply with you once I receive it.

e. The Governor's Telecommunications Information Council (made up of the cabinet and three others) may have the authority to consider the issues noted here. Although the council may not decide specific program content, its purpose regarding information technology resources is very broad.

Bob Arnold 10/19/88

SATELLITE TELEVISION SCHEDULE: WEEK OF OCTOBER 2, 1988

R E V I S E D

SUNDAY 10/2

2:00 AM	ALL-NIGHT PROGRAMMING
3:00	SCHEDULES
4:00	OLYMPIC COVERAGE
8:00	THE GONG SHOW
8:30	NFL LIVE!
9:00	NFL FOOTBALL (DOUBLEHEADER)
3:00 PM	CARTOONS
4:00	WONDERFUL WORLD OF DISNEY: (AN OFFICER & A DUCK)
5:00	NOVA
6:00	NATIONAL NEWS
6:30	CHANNEL 2 NEWS
7:00	SEOUL OLYMPICS CLOSING CEREMONY
11:00	60 MINUTES
12:00	GARY SHANDLING ALONE IN LAS VEGAS
1:00 AM	THE NEW TWILIGHT ZONE

MONDAY 10/3

7:00 PM	NFL FOOTBALL (DALLAS VS NEW ORLEANS)
10:00	THE HOGAN FAMILY
10:30	PERFECT STRANGERS
11:00	CHANNEL 2 NEWS
11:30	MOVIE: I MARRIED A CENTERFOLD

TUESDAY 10/4

7:30 PM	STATEWIDE NEWS
8:00	MOVIE: JESSE
10:00	BEYOND TOMORROW
11:00	CHANNEL 2 NEWS
11:30	ABC NIGHTLINE
12:00	MARRIED WITH CHILDREN
12:30 AM	RAWHIDE

WEDNESDAY 10/5

7:30 PM	STATEWIDE NEWS
8:00	V I C E P R E S I D E N T I A L D E B A T E
10:00	SIMON & SIMON
11:00	CHANNEL 2 NEWS
11:30	AMERICA'S MOST WANTED
12:00	L A T E M O V I E: SONGWRITER (890509)
1:15 AM	MAMA'S FAMILY

THURSDAY 10/6

7:00 PM	STATEWIDE NEWS
8:00	FLINTSTONE KIDS: JUST SAY NO
8:30	COWBOY JOE
9:00	MOVIE: OPEN ADMISSIONS (880809)
11:00	CHANNEL 2 NEWS
11:30	UNSOLVED MYSTERIES
12:30 AM	THE REPORTERS

FRIDAY 10/7

7:30 PM	STATEWIDE NEWS
8:00	MOVIE: STREET OF DREAMS
10:00	SPECIAL: LILY TOMLIN: SOLD OUT (881609)
11:00	CHANNEL 2 NEWS
11:30	MTV VIDEO MUSIC AWARDS

SATURDAY 10/8

6:00 AM	CARTOONS
10:00	THE AIR WE BREATHE
10:30	COLLEGE FOOTBALL (TEXAS VS OKLAHOMA)
2:00 PM	CARTOON
2:30	WILD AMERICA
3:00	WONDERWORKS
4:00	NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY SPECIAL
5:00	STAR TREK: T H E N E X T G E N E R A T I O N
6:00	NATIONAL NEWS
6:30	CHANNEL 2 NEWS
7:00	SPECIAL: IT'S THE GIRL IN THE RED TRUCK, CHARLIE BROWN(881709)
8:00	GLEASON: THE GREAT ONE (881709)
10:00	THE EQUALIZER
11:00	MOVIE: THE BEST OF TIMES
1:00 AM	SHE'S THE SHERIFF

(DAYTIME - MONDAY THRU FRIDAY)

5:30 AM	20 MINUTE WORKOUT
6:00	ABC WORLD NEWS THIS MORNING
6:30	BUSINESS THIS MORNING
7:00	T O D A Y S H O W
9:00	WHEEL OF FORTUNE
9:30	SALLY JESSY RAPHAEL
10:00	CARTOONS
11:00	SESAME STREET
12:00	ALL MY CHILDREN
1:00 PM	PRICE IS RIGHT
2:00	GENERAL HOSPITAL
3:00	MR. ROGERS
3:30	GOVERNOR'S WINDOW
4:00	3-2-1 CONTACT (WEDNESDAY - ALASKA DELEGATION REPORT)
4:30	TBA
5:30	MON - BEWITCHED TUE - MY TWO DADS WED - GROWING PAINS THU - FULL HOUSE FRI - 227
6:00	NATIONAL NEWS
6:30	STATEWIDE NEWS
7:00	ALASKA WEATHER

SATELLITE TELEVISION SCHEDULE: WEEK OF OCTOBER 9, 1988

SUNDAY 10/9

0 AM	SUNDAY TODAY
7:30	SCHEDULES
8:30	CARTOONS
10:30	AMERICAN LEAGUE PLAYOFF GAME 4
2:00 PM	CARTOONS
3:00	THE AIR WE BREATHE
3:30	WILD AMERICA
4:00	NATIONAL LEAGUE PLAYOFF GAME 5
7:00	ABC WORLD NEWS SUNDAY
7:30	STATEWIDE NEWS
8:00	60 MINUTES
9:00	MOVIE: "LEAVE HER TO HEAVEN"
11:00	BODYWATCHING
12:00	CALIFORNIA GIRLS
1:00 AM	THE TWILIGHT ZONE

MONDAY 10/10

11:00 AM	AMERICAN LEAGUE PLAYOFF GAME 5
2:00 PM	PRICE IS RIGHT
7:00	NFL FOOTBALL (N.Y. GIANTS VS PHILADELPHIA)
10:00	THE HOGAN FAMILY
10:30	PERFECT STRANGERS
11:00	CHANNEL 2 NEWS
11:30	MOVIE: "THE MAN WITH ONE RED SHOE"

TUESDAY 10/11

4:00 PM	NATIONAL LEAGUE PLAYOFF GAME 6 (IF NECESSARY)
7:00 PM	ALASKA WEATHER
7:30	STATEWIDE NEWS
8:00	MOVIE: "OUTBACK BOUND" (881110)
10:00	BEYOND TOMORROW
11:00	CHANNEL 2 NEWS
11:30	ABC NIGHTLINE
12:00	MARRIED WITH CHILDREN
12:30 AM	RAWHIDE

WEDNESDAY 10/12

11:00 AM	AMERICAN LEAGUE PLAYOFF GAME 6 (IF NECESSARY)
2:00 PM	PRICE IS RIGHT
4:00	NATIONAL LEAGUE PLAYOFF GAME 7 (IF NECESSARY)
7:00	ALASKA WEATHER
7:30	STATEWIDE NEWS
8:00	SPECIAL: SEVEN WONDERS OF THE CIRCUS WORLD (880710)
9:00	LIVE! DICK CLARK PRESENTS(880510)
10:00	SIMON & SIMON
11:00	CHANNEL 2 NEWS
11:30	AMERICA'S MOST WANTED
12:00	LATE MOVIE: "NIGHT HEAT"(881509)
1:15 AM	MAMA'S FAMILY

THURSDAY 10/13

4:00 PM	AMERICAN LEAGUE PLAYOFF GAME 7 (IF NECESSARY)
7:00	ALASKA WEATHER
7:30	STATEWIDE NEWS
8:00	MURDER, SHE WROTE
9:00	MOVIE: "RETURN OF SHERLOCK HOLMES" (881509)
11:00	CHANNEL 2 NEWS
11:30	UNSOLVED MYSTERIES
12:30 AM	THE REPORTERS

FRIDAY 10/14

7:30 PM	THE COSBY SHOW
8:00	LOVE BOAT
9:00	20/20
10:00	AIRWOLF
11:00	CHANNEL 2 NEWS
11:30	RODNEY DANGERFIELD SHOW
12:30 AM	FRIDAY NIGHT VIDEOS

SATURDAY 10/15

6:00 AM	CARTOONS
10:00	THE MERCEDES MILE
10:30	COLLEGE FOOTBALL (MIAMI VS NOTRE DAME)
2:00 PM	CARTOONS
3:00	AFTERSCHOOL SPECIAL: DATE RAPE
4:00	WORLD SERIES GAME 1
7:00	WEBSTER
7:30	CADETS
8:00	DISNEY MAGIC: "SMOKE"
10:00	TBA
11:00	MOVIE: A S T R A N G E R W A I T S (881909)
1:00 AM	SHE'S THE SHERIFF

(DAYTIME - MONDAY THRU FRIDAY)

5:30 AM	20 MINUTE WORKOUT
6:00	ABC WORLD NEWS THIS MORNING
6:30	BUSINESS THIS MORNING
7:00	GOOD MORNING AMERICA
9:00	FAMILY FEUD
9:30	WHEEL OF FORTUNE
10:00	CARTOONS
11:00	SESAME STREET
12:00	ALL MY CHILDREN
1:00 PM	PRICE IS RIGHT
2:00	GENERAL HOSPITAL
3:00	MR. ROGERS
3:30	GOVERNOR'S WINDOW
4:00	3-2-1 CONTACT (WEDNESDAY - ALASKA DELEGATION REPORT)
4:30	TBA
6:00	NATIONAL NEWS
6:30	STATEWIDE NEWS
7:00	ALASKA WEATHER

Summary of responses from fourteen additional superintendents to two questions on our questionnaire.

---

1. Are there state laws or regulations which handicap your efforts at obtaining the levels of student achievement your district seeks to realize?

INSTRUCTION

- Labor-management issues have taken time away from effective-schooling efforts.
- There is a lack of direction by the Department of Education on early childhood education.
- New special education regulations, like earlier vocational education regulations, impose a burden that will take away from instructional efforts.
- Current foundation formula hurts single site school districts in their efforts to improve instruction.

STAFF

- The State should not mandate how in-service days may be used.
- The tenure law..."teachers become ineffectual [and] it is hard to get them out of the system, particularly if they have been good teachers in the past."

OTHER

- There are excessive regulations and mandates from the federal agencies, the Department of Education, and the legislature.
- The Department is having difficulty in defining its role. Is it to be regulatory or supportive?
- Any statute that forces a district to spend time outside the basic curriculum or "to make staff changes as they have become available rather than as need dictates."

2. What do you think are the three or four most important steps the State Board of Education or the legislature should take to help schools improve their performance in basic skill areas?

FUNDING

- "...money, money, time and money."

- Recognize the unique funding needs of the small single site school district.

- Funding for pre-school programs.

- State financial support directed at specific needs.

- Funding for community education at 1985 levels.

INSTRUCTION

- Provide for "laboratory schools," exempting them from State laws and regulations and allowing them to try innovative approaches to schooling.

- Encourage local school community problem solving as an an alternative to increased State regulation.

- More information on research in education needs to be disseminated.

- Bilingual/bicultural education should be offered after school to allow school day to be devoted to basic skills and regular academic subjects.

- The Department of Education should provide technical assistance in early childhood education and other areas.

- A dormitory school for the basic education of 8th and 9th graders from rural areas is needed; also a vocationally-oriented dormitory high school.

- "Spend energies in <u>basic</u> <u>education</u> and not with special interest programs and groups."

- Endow 14 to 18 chairs at the University of Alaska to be filled by authentic specialists in teaching of each of the content areas.

STAFF

- Teacher preparation by the University needs to be improved, especially in language arts and math.

- Give support to the University so that it can prepare good candidates for specific teaching needs.

- Training is needed for district staff in instructional skills appropriate to bush schools and in aligning the tests with curriculum.

- Reward teachers who are truly qualified with higher salaries.

OTHER

- Large increases in funding for social services are required to assist schools in making progress.

- Don't over-emphasize testing as a measure of achievement; it is only trivia that is measured.

- Continue to support the right of a child to an education in his or her own community.

- Both advisory committees and regular school boards need training in their responsibilities.

- Continue the Senate Special Committee on School Performance "to encourage the development of excellent educational opportunities for all...and to monitor such plans as the QEM project."

- Community support of after-school activities needs to be encouraged, and not only athletic activities.

- "Define basic education clearly and stick to the definition."

----------Notes and comments----------

a. This summary is drawn from the responses of five city or borough school districts, eight from REAA's, and one from the state-operated boarding school.

b. I have been surprised and dismayed that only half the superintendents in the state have responded to this committee's questionnaire. More accurately, I should say that it is incomprehensible to me that superintendents would not seize the opportunity presented by the questionnaire to amplify and explain poor test score results by providing longitudinal data (as some did), by putting test scores in a larger perspective (as some did), by calling attention to factors affecting achievement beyond the control of the school (as some did), by boasting -- and properly so -- of innovative strategies or programs that seem to be working (as some did), by showing commitment and resolution to bringing about higher levels of student achievement (as some did), or even, by dismissing basic skills achievement test scores as being of any validity (as some did).

Apart from these reasons for answering the questions, it <u>was</u> a legislative committee that asked them.

c. Since attending to the quality of a school's performance is largely the responsibility of local school boards in Alaska, together with the superintendents they have chosen, I informed board presidents last June of our queries to superintendents.

Bob Arnold 10/21/88

Extracts from "School-Based Management: The Next Needed Education Reform," by James W. Guthrie, in Phi Delta Kappan, December 1986, five pages.

---

1. Unless policies are identified that unleash productive local initiatives, the reform movement seems likely to lose its momentum... sustained school reform requires the active involvement of educators at the building level.

2. School-based management stems from a belief in the individual school as the fundamental decision-making unit within the educational system....a school faculty and its principal constitute -- or should constitute -- a natural team. Moreover, parents and students usually give their allegiance to a school, rather than to a district [or State].

3. The states should continue to establish broad policies for education...districts should continue to coordinate the efforts of local schools and to tailor state policies to local circumstances [but] policy makers must give school personnel the necessary authority to address and solve educational problems. [There are four elements:]

The Principal as chief executive officer. Sometimes a school will languish despite the efforts of an able principal. But a school with a weak principal almost never remains effective for very long.

- no one in the central office should receive a higher salary than the principals.

- most able teachers in each school should be able to earn as much as their principals.

- no teacher [could] be assigned to a school without the principal's approval. [To do otherwise would be impractical and unfair if the principal is to be held responsible.]

School advisory councils. One means of gathering feedback from school clients and encouraging employee participation is through school advisory councils.

- [could be two separate councils or one composed of both parents and teachers]

- [the primary purpose of councils would be] advising the principal on...disciplinary policies, program planning, hiring new faculty members, and allocation of school resources.

- Councils can take part in the evaluation of principals.

School site budgeting and accounting. To function effectively as chief executive officers, principals must have discretion over school resources. But they must also be held accountable for the manner in which they allocate resources.

- Beyond [the percentage required for district functions], the aggregate amount a school generates by virtue of its enrollment is under its control.

- The money could be used to hire a teacher, two aides, or a librarian. It could be used instead to finance field trips or other school projects.

- Schools should be permitted to carry over school funds from one year to the next.

Annual planning and performance reports. [Each school would be responsible for an annual report] to let clients and school district officials know how well the school is meeting its goals, how it deploys its resources, and what plans it has for the future. [The report might include:]

- A statistical description of the school.

- Data on pupils' performance.

- Reports by parents and members of the professional staff.

- Future plans.

- Budget information.

4. Greater empowerment for local schools, while crucial for eliciting professional commitment and organizational involvement, is insufficient by itself to sustain school reform... Educators and local officials need to know -- and state policy makers and the public deserve to know -- how the schools are performing.

5. One way to accomplish this systematically is through a state-administered performance assessment system [that would include criterion referenced tests aligned with performance goals set by the state, and data such as absenteeism, dropout rates, and students' downstream performance.]

6. The time is ripe to implement school based management.... Meanwhile, the advocates of vouchers wait in the wings, hoping that the current excellence movement will falter and thus give them an opening for far more radical changes than those proposed here.

----------Comments----------

a. Variations in school-based management approaches are being tried in a number of states, some dating back to the 1970's. The central ideas -- that effective schools are largely dependent upon local partnerships between the community and the school and that principals need to be instructional leaders of the schools -- are widely accepted. Based on these conclusions, at least one state, Illinois, has defined in law the primary role of principal to be that of instructional leader. Administrative certificates will not be renewed there unless the administrator demonstrates the ability to establish productive parent-school relationships, establish a high-quality school climate and good classroom organization, and to provide instructional leadership.

2. Some form of school-based management deserves consideration in Alaska, I think, for two additional reasons: one is that persons testifying in Anchorage told of their continuing desire for local -- as distinct from regional -- control; a second is that if effective community/professional governance of a local school could be assured, some consolidation of the administrative functions carried out by REAA's (one of which enrolls only 98 pupils) could be seriously evaluated for possible cost savings.

3. An annual report on school performance such as advocated by this writer makes good sense if local control of any kind is to have any meaning. But planning for such a report should involve the community, as well as educators. I obtained the report card that Illinois requires each school to mail to its community or neighborhood and, I regret to say, it is not a good model. It is fine for persons who are find percentiles, growth scale values, stanines, and quartiles interesting and instructive, but I don't think it tells parents what they want and need to know.

4. Perhaps the writer is correct in thinking that the idea of cash-anywhere vouchers is viewed as a radical idea, but there are variations which are certainly not. The opportunity the State provides 195 high schoolers to attend Mt. Edgecumbe rather than schools in their home communities is a voucher of sorts -- an authorization to use state funds to obtain schooling outside of an attendance area. The rural areas clearly support existing provisions for local schooling, but appear to also support alternatives for some learners. With 170 applicants for places at Mt.Edgecumbe turned away this year for lack of space, it may be desirable to consider whether a variation of the voucher could provide those alternatives at other locations.

Bob Arnold 10/25/88

Notes on Schools for the 21st Century: Project Abstracts, Washington State Board of Education, July 1988.

1. In 1987, the Washington legislature enacted the Schools for the 21st Century program, providing educators and parents at the local level the opportunity to improve student performance by restructuring their schools. It also provided that, where necessary and appropriate, temporary waivers of state laws and regulations would be granted. And it provided for competitive grants to 21 schools or districts to assist them in restructuring. Grants to individual schools were expected to not exceed $50,000, but could be larger for districts.

2. An explicit requirement was that the school's proposal be developed by the school's professional staff in cooperation with its superintendent and governing board; parents, businesses, and other organizations were required to commit to support of the proposed plan, and applicants typically involved these groups in developing the plan.

3. Abstracts of the 127 applications received are testimony of the concern of school/community groups to improve schooling and of their ability to devise ways to do it.

4. Here are just a few of the kinds of activities promised by one or more of the 9 successful elementary school applicants:

- Train teachers in classroom use of computers; provide computers for teacher home use.
- Open the school year with ten days' planning and in-service activities for teachers.
- Move from an isolated textbook-focussed approach to an integrated thematic curriculum.
- Involve parents in the schools; look into the opening of a day-care center in the school to make this possible.
- Establish a community learning center (intelligence, Japanese language, computers, enrichment activities) for students, parents, and everyone in the community.
- Initiate drop-out prevention strategies beginning with kindergarten children.
- Restructure to continue small class sizes, multi-age groupings, and extended planning time.
- Provide for a nurturing environment.

- Counseling agencies to hold regular office hours at the school; social workers to visit parents at home.

- The business community to provide mentors to help slower learners to master basic skills and learn job requirements and work performance standards.

- Cooperative learning, cross-age tutoring, and reading in the content area will be employed in the school's program of four integrated themes -- academics, technology, physical wellness, and emotional wellness.

- Staff collegiality to be obtained through team planning, peer evaluation, and cross-grade activities.

5. Here are some intentions of the one middle school receiving a grant:

- Restructure to an outcome-based, mastery learning model with a challenging curriculum.

- All students to have access to the most enriched curriculum opportunities presently experienced by only a few students.

- Assist struggling students through a daily correctives/ enrichment period, an after-school study club, extension of time for work completion each grading period, use of computer-assisted instruction, and peer tutoring.

- Set target that 80 percent of the students will achieve at the highest levels, instead of the usual 20 percent.

6. Here are some proposed activities of one or more of the 6 high schools receiving grants:

- An intensive, scholastic and career counseling component will be initiated at the freshman level.

- Telecommunications technology will be employed to put students in touch with distant locations.

- Increase the effectiveness of the school-based management team.

- One emphasis will be on multi-cultural/global studies; another will be increased student community service, as well as use of the community as a learning place.

- The initial goal is to increase student engagement in learning.

- Restructuring will take place in four areas: curriculum, organization, instruction, and technology.

- The school day will be lengthened, a community school will be created, and students will become involved with community and regional resources.

- New interdisciplinary dynamic learning units will be organized around such issues as energy, social justice, and communications.

- The program will stress thinking skills and cooperative learning.

6. Here are some examples of activities from one or more of the 6 district and network proposals:

- The emphasis in the first year will be upon encouraging teachers to improve their metacognitive and cognitive skills so they can transfer them to their students.

- Rural school needs will be met through the use of telecommunications technology at the same time the school studies the structure of the school, pilots innovations, and evaluates them.

- Support and educate high risk children and youth by identifying such children, establishing an elementary and a middle school as alternative schools, enlisting volunteer families, and providing both a weekend and evening school program.

---------- Comments ----------

a. What is largely lost in my report (above) of what schools are proposing to do to make their schools better is the eager tone and c fident spirit that characterize many of the abstracts. (See attachments) In reading some of the abstracts, I had the sense that the professional staffs were just waiting for the state to ask them, "Can you make schools better places for learning by all children?" so they could quickly answer, "Yes, and here's how."

b. In my view, writers of winning proposals showed good knowledge of the latest research evidence on teaching and learning, and they devised plans that appeared to be responsive to their specific school situations and the opportunities or limitations of their specific communities.

c. There were very few requests for waivers of law and regulation.

Bob Arnold 10/27/88

ABSTRACT

IMAGINE A PLACE WHERE NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE II

A place where our best dreams become realities and everyone is involved in creating the magic. Imagine what Montlake can become.

THE NEXT STEP

Three years ago we created the Montlake Project. We were able to reduce class size significantly, increase staff development, and change the structure of the day to respond more appropriately to student needs. The results were dramatic. Student achievement jumped immediately (we were even able to stop labeling and tracking special education students). Teacher morale and parent satisfaction rose just as quickly.

Now Montlake is ready for another major change. This change will be built upon the old foundation and the things we are continuing to learn about our students and ourselves.

Restructuring schools is an exciting prospect. And hard work. Letting go of our self-imposed limits takes real courage. The staff at Montlake has that courage. And so we have designed a comprehensive program that will continue to challenge all of us to grow and keep on growing until our dreams come true and still we are reaching for new possibilities.

Key components of this program are:

1. Restructuring the use of staff, time, and resources to continue small class sizes, multi-age groupings, and extended planning time. (Instruction and Methodology)
2. Continuing teacher development through collaborative programs with the University of Washington that will provide for Montlake teacher growth and will model significant changes in the University program for new teachers. (Professional Development)
3. Extending teaching/learning opportunities through the use of technology and expanding the use of the community. (Curriculum Expansion)
4. Enriching each student's resources by celebrating our diverse ideas, skills, and backgrounds; developing pro-social skills and drug abuse prevention skills; and expanding decision-making skills, creativity, and higher level thinking skills. (Student Achievement and Success)
5. Creating a network of schools to share what's working and support continued growth. (Collaboration)

ABSTRACT

SCHOOLS FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY PROPOSAL

SEHOME HIGH SCHOOL

Background: Our proposal describes the activities we will undertake over the next two years as we strive to realize our vision. As members of Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development's High School Futures Consortium we are committed to preparing a five year plan for restructuring Sehome in four areas: curriculum, organization, instruction, and technology. Our current efforts in planning for the future as a member of the ASCD High School Futures Consortium can only be enhanced by our selection as a School for the Twenty-first Century.

Vision: Sehome High School plans to become a community of learners. Our vision describes a place where staff and students, parents, and the community are cooperatively involved in pursuing intellectual, physical, emotional, aesthetic and ethical excellence. We believe that a staff who models a love of learning, respects quality, and cares for individuals in its charge will produce students who share those values and practice them as the foundation for a productive and satisfying life.

Learner Outcome: To fulfill this vision and prepare students for the future, we have identified several learner outcomes. For example, students will need to enhance their critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and communication skills. However, we can achieve none of these outcomes unless the students are more involved in their learning. Our initial goal is to increase student engagement in learning.

Plan of Action: We propose a plan with three components that relate to our vision statement, development of a five year plan, and the stated student outcome.

A. **Collaborative Teaching** -- We will pilot a model of collaborative teaching utilizing peer coaching for all certificated personnel. The first year, the content of the model is cooperative learning, which research has shown to be effective in increasing student engagement.

B. **Mariner Seminars** -- We will pilot a learning community structure consisting of small seminars involving all students and certificated staff organized around a common theme. Year one focuses on learning styles.

C. **Futures Planning** -- We will utilize 'per diem' days throughout the year to complete a comprehensive five year plan to restructure the school.

Evaluation: We plan to measure changes in student engagement in learning through utilization of the McREL "Achieving Excellence Program." Two additional evaluation processes that will be used to measure school effectiveness, academic achievement and climate issues are the Bellingham School District's self-study and an internal analysis which is part of the ASCD Strategic Planning process.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Abstract of the Project

The Extended Learning Family is a proposal to restructure a set of school programs and create new ones that will support and educate high risk youth from birth to adulthood. Its purpose is to develop adults who have the maturity and skills to be good parents and productive citizens. Specifically, **The Extended Learning Family** will attempt to break cycles of abuse, teen pregnancy, dependency on the social system, delinquency, truancy and dropping out of school. It will do so with the help of positive role models, both male and female, for students from infancy to adulthood.

Challenger High School, the foundation for **The Extended Learning Family**, currently serves forty-one teen parents and fifteen pregnant teens from age fourteen through twenty-one. Daycare is provided separately for infants and toddlers. Other presently offered district programs which will be modified or folded into the project include:

- **Explorer Preschool**, which now serves ten teen parents and their eighteen to thirty-six month old children
- **Dropout Prevention in the Elementary School and Survey 66**, instruments used in the traditional schools of the district to identify who is at-risk, in what ways they are at-risk, and to what extent
- **Bethel Alternative Junior High**, a separate school for high risk eighth and ninth graders
- **The Volunteer Family**, a federally funded program which matches twenty-one to seventy year old volunteers one-to-one with teen parents
- **An Independent Community-Based Advisory Board** to assist in evaluation of these programs

New programs in this proposal include:

- **Discovery Elementary School** for thirty at-risk children
- **An Outreach Program** referring out-of school youth into an **Evening School** for thirteen students and a **Weekend School** for thirty-nine

Restructuring current educational options will include:

- Linking up with DSHS for **Slotted Daycare**
- Moving the **Alternative Junior High** to the Challenger site and renaming it **Voyager Junior High**
- Establishing a **Transition Program** at Challenger High School

Significant features of the proposal are a four day school week from September through July, evening and weekend options for self-supporting youth, Friday in-service and staff development, a requirement for parents' involvement in their children's education, a guarantee to parents of student performance, individually guided learning programs, the integration of educational technology with simulated family small group sessions (high-tech/high-touch), the inclusion of those from birth to five as students, the presence of some adult learners in the school, establishment of mentorships, and incorporation of cross-age tutoring throughout the program.

Evaluation of **The Extended Learning Family** will be both internal and external. Staff will be assessing various phases of the program weekly as part of its Friday in-services, assisted by records of contract completions, hours of parent participation, hours of volunteer participation, attendance comparisons, pre- and post-test summaries, and substance abuse assessments. Evaluation by the community advisory board will continue and expand to new components. Independent evaluations will be based on the above mentioned records, on-site visitations, student, parent, staff, and volunteer interviews, and standardized instruments.

ABSTRACT

OBE MODEL

The graduating class of 2001 will enter kindergarten in the1988-89 school year. In this pilot project, we propose to clearly define the Exit Outcomes and learning expectations which will equip these potential graduates with the competencies, knowledge, and attitudes for successful lives in the 21st Century. Ultimately, Exit Outcomes will drive our educational model and competency based teaching practices will provide expanded opportunities for successful learning experiences for all students. Our guiding model is Outcome-Based Education (OBE).

The three key premises, with an additional Yakima corollary, for OBE are:

KEY PREMISES

1. All students can learn and will learn.
2. Success breeds success.
3. Schools control the conditions of success.
4. Learning is enhanced when a systematic process of parent/school partnership is used in all grades K-12 (Yakima corollary).

Two guiding principles which shape the character and intent of all OBE practice are:

TWO GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. CLARITY OF FOCUS: The instructional organization, components, and practices of schools should be designed around the clearly defined outcomes all students must demonstrate.

2. EXPANDED OPPORTUNITY: Schools must deliberately provide all students with the time and instruction they need to reach essential outcome goals.

The guiding principles will be met during the six years of the pilot project by:

SIX STEP PLAN

STEP 1 - Identifying Yakima Public School District Exit Outcomes.

STEP 2 - Instituting a K-12 parent/student/school partnership plan based on the recently formulated Yakima Public Schools District Parent Involvement policy and designed to meet OBE principles.

STEP 3 - Aligning curriculum, content, and instruction to focus on the District expected Exit Outcomes.

STEP 4 - Revising student assessment to be criterion referenced and clearly aligned with desired unit outcomes, and requiring a high level of student success on assessments before credit is received.

STEP 5 - Focusing instructional delivery and staff development around Exit Outcomes and proven educational practices.

STEP 6 - Basing student placement and advancement on results from expanded learning opportunities, not the calendar or "seat time" to take a course.

EXPORTABLE MODEL

This pilot project will enable Yakima to provide an exportable model to be used throughout Washington in other school districts wishing to implement OBE. We are requesting from Schools for the 21st Century Grant Project $50,975 for the pilot project and $53,500 for supplemental contracts totaling $104,475 per year for six years.

COST

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Abstract

Education for the 21st century requires more than at any other time, a uniform, high academic standard. This means, in essence, moving the high jump bar from four to six feet. If Washington educators do this without giving additional coaching to youth who were not clearing the bar when it was set at four feet then they have, in effect, increased the current 24 percent drop-out rate by an additional unsuccessful group called "push-outs." This model presents a strategy for helping elementary students, potentially at-risk, to master a tough universal curriculum along with their peers. The assumption is that the best way to prevent high school drop-out is to make elementary school more successful.

Recognizing that no single agency or organization can hope to make a difference by working alone, Prospect Point Elementary School has formed a public/private partnership with the school staff, district administrators, all three colleges, parents, and directors of community agencies. Together they have identified student performance objectives, developed a comprehensive community-based strategy for achieving objectives, and designed a research methodology to evaluate the results.

To accomplish these objectives, the Prospect Point Youth Council, composed of twenty-two agency directors, met together and coordinated contractual services to be delivered to students and their families at the school. These services are designed to 1) support children identified as being at risk, and 2) clear the way for them to achieve the high academic standards set for all children.

The partnership puts the home, the school, and the community in an interactive, networking system that flows between Prospect Point and the community at large. Teaching teams meet regularly with professors at Walla Walla College, Whitman College, and Walla Walla Community College for collegial sharing and professional development; professors and college students come to Prospect Point for research and professional training.

Counseling agencies hold regular office hours at the school to provide sophisticated individual and group counseling. Social workers visit parents in their homes. Parents come to the school for parenting classes developed by the colleges. The Walla Walla Public Library, YMCA, YWCA, and Camp Fire organizations provide before and after school care at Prospect Point. Students take Valley Transit to the facilities of the same organizations for Life Long Skill Development and prosocial activities.

Teachers become involved in the formation and evolution of the curriculum for the 21st century; preparing students for a literacy-intensive society. Educational sites are established at the Walla Walla Public Library, and the YWCA, the YMCA and integrated with the classroom. A local artist joins the staff to teach students the non-verbal language of the arts.

The business community, made up of First Federal Savings Bank, the Walla Walla Sheriff's Department, the Washington State Penitentiary, and the Senior Citizen's Center, provides mentors to help slower learners master basic skills. They also teach job skills, work performance standards, and how to manage student-run businesses. Law enforcement agencies teach students assertiveness and refusal skills.

Senate Special Committee on School Performance No. 36

Summary of presentations made at this committee's hearing in Fairbanks, November 2, 1988.

The hearing was convened at 7:35 p.m. by Chairman Willie Hensley with Senators Johne Binkley and Ken Fanning in attendance.

Reva Shircel, education coordinator for the Tanana Chiefs Conference, described serious social issues affecting Alaska Natives and called for the incorporation of the meaning and values of Native cultures into the western curriculum. She said another urgent priority is to increase the number of Natives, especially males, who are employed as educators. She also said there is a need for skills-of-living and parenting courses.

The director of the X-CED program at the University of Alaska, Dr. Ray Barnhardt, urged the committee to seek changes in law to allow persons to become certificated teachers without the baccalaureate in order to increase the number of Native teachers, which he said was a critical factor in successful schools in rural areas. A second means of increasing the number of Native teachers, he said, would be to increase the amount and forgiveness provisions of the Teacher Education Loan Fund. He also urged the establishment of a research foundation to address Alaska education issues.

Dr. Judy Kleinfeld, head of the Department of Education at the University, told the committee that there has been an explosion of knowledge about how to teach reading and writing, but that it is too little applied. She told of a teacher who did apply what is known (in this case, reciprocal teaching and semantic mapping), and did so in a culturally sensitive way, and it resulted in a year's gain for the students in reading comprehension. She expressed concern that society is nurturing attitudes that are hurtful, finding among her students (who are planning to teach) indications that some have low expectations of students in rural areas.

The superintendent of the Yukon-Koyukuk REAA, Fred Lau, described a variety of programs his district carries out to improve communication skills and build positive attitudes and self-images of students, such as an academically demanding curriculum, assignment of homework, employment of Native educators, academic competetitions, and development of innovative programs. He said his district has three itinerant counselors, and counselors should be required in all districts. He said the Department of Education should spend less time regulating and more time in piloting programs and disseminating information. He also recommended that the University's cross-cultural education program be reviewed by outside evaluators.

Two private school educators, James Vanderwaal and Craig Louden, told the committee that per pupil costs were less than $2,000 per student each year in their schools, but that student achievement was high. Vanderwaal urged certification of teachers based on competence, whether education courses were taken or not. Both speakers recommended tuition vouchers so that parents could choose schools.

Two students, Carl Conway and Jonathan Driscoll, made similar recommendations regarding vouchers, explaining that the result would be to make schools better through competition and by involving parents in the education of their children.

Tuition vouchers were also urged by five parents -- Wayne Gregory, Barbara Tindall, Philip Best, Marilyn Buchanan, and Dave Buchanan. Among other things, they said that money would not assure quality education, parents want discipline and results, that moral values must be a part of a successful school, and that public schools elsewhere had improved through competition with private schools.

Bob Gregory Pikok, proprietor of Rainbow Family Productions, told the committee how racial myths retard learning for all and that his publications are aimed at ending racism. He said if there is to be equal opportunity there must be a stress on our common humanity, and that his publications, among other things, aim at that result.

Agnes Sweetsir, a parent and former resident of a rural area, said that local control had resulted in a lowering of academic standards and that teachers in rural systems were choosing to send their own children elsewhere. She said she had moved to Fairbanks to obtain a good education for her children. She also said that someone should look at how education funds are being spent and administered.

Librarian Sue Sherriff said researchers agree that reading skills are developed by reading, and that a reader whose experience is limited to textbooks will not perform well at reading. Too many libraries lack books that should be in every school library. Her views on the importance of libraries were echoed by Pat Thurmond and Margie Thomas, who pointed out that 1989 is the Year of the Young Reader and who urged that libraries be given support in educational programs.

A former superintendent, Dr. Stan Bippus, presented a paper detailing a number of recommendations, including the need for booklets to aid parents in knowing what their children are to learn each year, a State purpose of schooling, minimum outcomes for learners, achievement-based learning (rather than time-based), alternative graduation requirements, and education of school board members.

Greg Ruff, program manager of KUAC-TV (a public television station) told the committee that his station was seeking to provide instructional television again, following the loss of such programming with the deletion of State funding in 1986 for the LearnAlaska network. He is doing so, he said, through cooperative efforts with the school district and the Department of Education. Among other things, he said he is making efforts to reach both parents and children with special programming six nights a week in prime time.

A teacher of Native culture to Fairbanks children, Poldine Carlo, said she is paid only ten dollars an hour to teach, despite the fact that she has no textbook to rely upon and must rely upon the knowledge she possesses, while conventional teachers are paid much more.

Sam Dementieff, executive director of the Fairbanks Native Association, said Alaskans need to know more about the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, more Native teachers and counselors should be employed in schools, Native support programs are needed, teachers should have cultural sensitivity training, and class size should be limited.

Fairbanks teacher Susan Stitham recommended to the committee that good, experienced people in effective schools be asked to think about restructuring schools. The way to do it, she said, would be to fund a process of competitive grants to schools that want to be better places to learn. She also told the committee it was important to highlight successes among Alaska schools.

The chairman of the Vocational Education Advisory Council, Al Haynes, said schools need to stress learning useful to students in becoming ready for the workforce. He said the recommendations of his committee were directly tied to the needs of the employers in the Fairbanks area. He also said that courses in applied technology can motivate students to master basic skills.

Parent and social worker Shirley Dementieff told the committee that competency tests for teachers should be instituted and a merit system -- including the classification of master teachers -- should be instituted. She said classes in how-to-learn, urban living skills, and parliamentary procedure are needed.

Chairman Hensley adjourned the hearing at 10:50 p.m.

Bob Arnold
11/4/88

Summary of presentations made at this committee's hearing in Fort Yukon, November 3, 1988.

The hearing was convened at 1:15 p.m. by Chairman Willie Hensley, with Senator Johne Binkley also in attendance.

Chairman Hensley opened by reporting that he and Senator Binkley had met with members of the Fort Yukon Student Council earlier in the day, and that the following issues had been called to their attention: that there are needs for a gymnasium and sports equipment, sewing and Indian beadwork, foreign language instruction, physics and other coursework needed for college; that some teachers are ineffective and should be rotated; and that the vocational education center has been underutilized since the program of bringing village students to Fort Yukon ended. Senator Binkley added that students had complained that tenure protected some teachers that were not good teachers.

The chairman of the Fort Yukon Local School Advisory Committee, Paul Schufeld, told the committee that changes had been made in the schools, like the dropping of the hot-lunch program, without anyone being informed. He said he needs to become better informed of the responsibilities of the advisory committee, and so do other members of the community. He said they all need to know more, but that he believes the advisory committee should be in charge of the school, not the school board made up of members from around the region.

Ronnie Starr, a pastor and administrator of a private school, said his program was a goal-based program and that students did not advance until they mastered certain goals.

A parent, Mary Solomon, told of moving her family back to Fort Yukon from Fairbanks and of enrolling her child in a ninth grade course that had already been covered in the 6th grade in Fairbanks. She said her daughter was not learning math nor speaking proper sentences. She said the kids had no pride in themselves or in the school: "If somebody tells you you're dumb, you're going to be dumb." What the kids need, she said, is to have teachers that really care. She also said that it was difficult to influence the school "when you're intimidated by the administrative people."

Virginia Alexander, a parent, detailed a 7th-8th grade curriculum that she said would be of greater interest and use than the repetitious material now being covered. She declared that the children can learn if teacher expectations are high, saying that "if you set low standards, that is all you will get." She said it took five months to persuade the regional school board to require teachers to return student work each Friday, but even now, teachers don't do it.

Jonathan Solomon, a parent, said he learned to read and write and stand before others and speak in a Bureau of Indian Affairs School, but today's students aren't learning these things. He said State-Operated Schools was better than the so-called locally controlled school. Teachers and administrators get raises, he said, but that results in the dropping of the hot-lunch and sports program.

Tanana Chiefs Conference spokesperson Daisy Stevens, a parent, said she moved away to Fairbanks because it was not possible for her children to get a good education in Fort Yukon. "Whatever they are taught here has been taught at a previous grade level." She said Fort Yukon teachers send their children away for their schooling. She told the committee there were many graduates around Fort Yukon who cannot handle basic math or English. And she asked why Athabascan was not being taught in the school.

The head of the elders' group, Mardo Solomon, told the committee that the standards in the school are too low, but that a lot of the blame falls on the parents. He called for more bilingual education and Native studies in the school.

Virginia Peter, a parent, told the committee of her struggles to improve her English-speaking abilities so that she could hold a job and not be criticized by her supervisors. She said the teachers in Fairbanks were nice to her son who is behind in his learning, but now that he is back in Fort Yukon, he doesn't like the teacher and it is difficult to persuade him to go to school.

June Talbot, a parent, said there were "lots of problems" in the local school and that children were leaving to attend school at Mt. Edgecumbe and in Oregon.

Betty Fleenor, a parent, told the committee that she had complained of the school for years. Her son attends a private school. She said school board members send their children away from Fort Yukon. She read a letter from a newly-elected member, Clarence Alexander, who said he welcomed the visit of the committee and told of his concerns about the quality of education needed -- both in western terms and Native heritage and language. In his letter, he also reported that the Native Village of Fort Yukon would be seeking a legislative audit of their school.

Delma Behn, a parent, told the committee that the people had to fight the school to get what they want. She said the little-used vocational center should be used for both the education of youth and adults.

Pat Stanley, an employee of the Council of Athabascan

Tribal Governments, told the committee of her concerns that regional graduates be qualified for work. She said the vocational education center was constructed for the region and was being used only for the community, and little-used at that.

The assistant to the superintendent, Dr. Juana Sanchez, said it was clear that communication problems existed within the community. She said the district should be recognized for the progress it has made in in-service programs, special education, and good bilingual programs in several villages and the hiring of a new bilingual teacher for Fort Yukon today. The lack of social services is a serious problem for educators, she said. If only one thing could be done by the legislature, she urged that it be to fully fund quality programs for pre-schoolers.

The principal of the school, Peter Van Borkulo, said there was some truth in everything that was being said, but that great changes had been made since his appointment. He said he tries to attract parents to the school with adult night and sewing night, but very few come. Fewer than five persons come to the advisory committee meetings. He said he hoped that the hearing would lead to improved communications between the school and community.

A student, Robert Springer (joined by another, Katie John), said there were problems with the school -- some classes are worthless -- but some students don't care and some students have drug problems. Parents need to become involved, he said, and maybe students need to communicate with them more to bring that about. He said he didn't want to disagree with the elders, but there is more than Native culture to learn -- "there is a world out there." He said Gwich'in should be taught, but students don't really care and maybe the schools shouldn't teach it. Katie John said some teachers simply have too many subjects to teach.

Steven Englishoe told the committee that there had been good programs in the past in home economics, physical education, and nutrition, but they had been phased out. He said they should be brought back, along with a good bicultural program. He also said he thought Peter Van Borkulo had brought real improvements to the school.

Chairman Hensley expressed regret that he could not hear all persons who had signed to appear because his schedule required him to depart for Fairbanks and Anchorage. He invited them to write to him.

Chairman Hensley adjourned the hearing at 4:25 p.m.

Bob Arnold 11/7/88

Summary of presentations made at this committee's hearing in Anchorage, November 12, 1988.

The hearing was convened at 1:05 p.m. by Chairman Willie Hensley. He explained that scheduling conflicts prevented other members from attending, but that their staff aides were present, and that a summary of testimony would be furnished all members of the committee.

Tom Robinson, a curriculum coordinator from the Iditarod REAA, told the committee that his twenty years' experience in rural schools had persuaded him that local people need to be more fully in charge of their schools, and that this means, in part, being classroom teachers. He urged that a three-year apprenticeship program to allow local people to become teachers without earning a baccalaureate be undertaken by the the fall of 1990. He said that "those of us who are university trained have failed, despite our best efforts," and that his own observations of Native paraprofessionals had testifed to their effectiveness in teaching roles.

Speaking for the Alaska Association for Bilingual Education, Dr. Marianne Inman told the committee that maintaining quality in bilingual programs requires continuing in-service. Even though conferences are held for this purpose, she said, more in-service is needed and could be accomplished through teleconferencing if the opportunity can be made available. Speaking for Alaska Pacific University, she described how professional associations are important in bringing together persons who teach at different levels. She also reported that the university's support of rural students admitted provisionally was resulting in a retention rate of 60 percent.

Dr. Duncan Ferguson, vice-president of Alaska Pacific University, described cooperative arrangements that have been made between public and private institutions, and told of their success. He urged the legislature to look to the possibility of additional cooperative arrangements to strengthen education in the state.

Eric Morrision, the associate director of the Alaska Native Institute at Alaska Pacific University, told the committee that the use of "peer partnerships" between students and partnerships with schools were contributing to the success the University was achieving in retaining rural Native students. He said that a third to a half of entering students need remedial programs to do college work.

Rob Lapham, a representative of Educational Systems Corporation which had installed computer labs in two schools

in the Yupiit REAA, said an integrated learning system is the best means to raise achievement in basic skill areas and to build self-esteem in students. He said the system is cost-effective and the legislature should fund a system for Capital School and see for itself.

The superintendent of the Yupiit REAA, Brad Raphel, told the committee that he turned to computer assisted/managed instruction because children were not learning from teachers (trained by the university) who wanted to lecture in their classrooms. He said the success his students had experienced in the "Write to Read" program led him to carry out research and then purchase (at $50,000 per site) the new system for two communities. He said the enthusiasm among the students was overwhelming, that he was amazed at the results he was already seeing, and that he is now developing a program based on the students' cultural heritage. He said there need to be more opportunities for superintendents to share things with others about what the have learned will work.

A University of Alaska professor, Marilyn Buckley, told the committee that "we can have any kinds of schools we want," and expressed her hope that the committee would be bold enough to not be satisfied with small changes. One of the important things, she said, is to stop doing things that we know are <u>not</u> working. Each school, she insisted, must "have the signature of its teachers, parents, and students." The need is to empower those who have the most at stake," she said, " and give them license to imagine and construct new forms of schooling." The new schools should emphasize education of the human spirit, she said, which is just as important as the education of the mind. In twenty-five years of work with schools, she said she had never met a child who wanted to fail, and to tolerate failure is immoral. She said there is nothing to substantiate that 6-year olds must know how to read and write, for the developmental years for reading and writing are ages four through twelve. She criticized schools for pitting one student against another, saying, "human beings love to help one another." She urged that language be taught through oral tradition and literature, not through basal readers, worksheets, and textbooks.

Speaking for the Association of School Librarian, Becky Dahlager told of the correlation between test scores and support for good libraries and librarians. She said more support is needed for distance learning. Also urging support for libraries was Dona Helmer, the former head of youth services for Anchorage libraries.

The principal of the Abbot Loop Christian School, Dave Wangaard, said that tuition at his school was about $2,500 a

year and that the top salary for a teacher was about $28,000, but that his test scores have been high. He asked for no additional regulation by the state, citing specifically the proposed prohibition against corporal punishment.

The president of the Alaska Council of Teachers of Mathematics, Jim Sietz, said that the use of calculators in mathematics by students is encouraged in Alaska as in the nation (Chicago purchased 200,000 of them for grades 4 through 6) and it is important that the statewide achievement tests being planned allow their use as well. He also told the committee that there are many persons teaching math who are not math teachers, and he urged provision for a full-time math specialist with the Department of Education.

Betty Breck told the committee that her daughter is now enrolled in a four-year high school correspondence course and that the state should consider paying bills for home schooling by a tuition voucher system. She said Alaska is number one in its attitude toward home schooling, and that 13 percent of the students in the Matanuska-Susitna borough are either in home schooling or in private schools.

Juliet Degnan Hartwick, a student becoming a teacher, said school districts continue to hire teachers from outside Alaska, despite the availabilty of teachers here, and no one seems to be able to do anything about it.

The superintendent of Southwest REAA, Dr. John Antonnen, urged the establishment of a mastery-learning based curriculum in each district, with high learning expectations for students, the development of early childhood programs emphasizing language development, and the employment of teachers skilled in theory and practice and making them accountable. He said the State should look at the small high schools and the bilingual education program to see how they're working. He also said there are serious social issues in the villages that need to be addressed.

June Degnan, a certificated teacher from Unalakleet, told the committee that an audit of the Bering Straits School District should be conducted because of its rejection of qualified applicants like herself for teaching positions. She said racism and discrimination is prevalent in the district.

St. Mary's School District superintendent Jim Zuelow called for the establishment of "laboratory schools," planned by students, parents, and teachers, that would be freed from regulations and laws in order to change. He said selection of students for Mt. Edgecumbe should be made jointly with

affected districts so that the best students aren't taken away from district schools. He asked help in coordinating the work of social workers and school nurses with schools.

Dot Lake school board member Bill Miller told the committee that Alaska has made it easy for persons dissatisfied with their schools in that they can take correspondence courses. He said tenure was a problem in his district in that some teachers need to be fired, and that accountability from teachers is needed.

Christine Scally, a special education teacher in Anchorage, told of sharp differences she had observed in the verbal IQ and performance IQ. She said the development of language skills in the little kids is a critical need.

Cheryl Kajdan, a school board member from the Copper River REAA, reported that the scores of students in her district were among the highest in Alaska, and that two factors had been high expectations on the part of the district for both students and teachers. She said that the district is now working at winning accreditation within one year.

Chairman Hensley adjourned the hearing at 4:55 p.m.

Bob Arnold 11/15/88

Notes from "An Early Childhood/Parenting Strategy for Alaska," by William G. Demmert, Jr., Commissioner, Alaska Department of Education, Juneau, October 31, 1988, 15 pages.

1. This paper, acknowledging that there are divergent views on the issue, is intended to "stimulate discussion that will lead to a broad based Alaska strategy to address early childhood and parenting issues in as comprehensive manner as possible."

2. There are three principal propositions that appear to be the basis of this paper:

- "Family disorganization has been identified as the most significant antecedent of behavior disorders and social pathology, such as suicide, dropouts, drug abuse, and vandalism."

- "The longitudinal evidence is showing that culturally and developmentally appropriate early childhood programs for young children ages 0-8 and their families can have a significant beneficial effect on later success in life."

- Problems in school performance are not just the result of inappropriate teaching methodology, but they are the consequence of "a growing number of social problems [students] bring into their classrooms."

3. The Department of Education's responsibilities should include:

- arming educators with understanding about the teaching of young children and helping them understand how to build partnerships between schools and families;

- assisting in restructuring schools in grades K - 3 by developing a model curriculum and programs which meet specified high standards;

- trying to assure that any strategy includes stable funding for existing and new programs integrating parent involvement for children from birth to 3 years;

- supporting pilot parenting projects in schools based on "respect for the ability of parents and family members to judge their own needs and to know what they want to learn."

4. The department is presently engaged in a multiplicity of activities relating to early childhood education/parenting (even though it has only the equivalent of one position), such as developing a traveling parenting curriculum, preparing a preschool demographic report,

advocating culturally and developmentally appropriate curricula, and providing technical assistance.

5. In a concluding note, Commissioner Demmert says, "For Alaska to properly support the success of all children in public schools, Alaska must first focus its efforts on strengthening families."

----------Comments----------

a. At the same time Commissioner Demmert is seeking to stimulate debate and development of a strategy, he has made clear what some of the needs are in this area. One of these is a concern for the quality of programs in pre-school. An important article supportive of that concern is "When Psychology Informs Public Policy: The Case of Early Childhood Intervention," by Martin Woodhead (American Psychologist, June, 1988).

There is too much in this article for me to adequately convey its contents in this note, but, among other things, Woodhead argues convincingly that minimum standards resembling successful programs are required if a preschool program is to meet public expectations. He also points out that other variables not investigated (such as positive experiences in later schooling) may account for the success being attributed to one preschool program or another. His review of the research led him to conclude that early intervention's success in the short term was that it rendered students better able to cope with the demands of schooling.

b. Parenting and early childhood education were subjects also of Commissioner Demmert's presentation at the Juneau hearing, you may recall. He urged creation of a competitive fund to be used to address these issues together. At the same hearing, he urged creation of a competitive fund for grades K-4 to allow restructuring language development programs on a pilot basis.

c. One program of parenting/early childhood education that has won some attention in Arkansas and that might be useful to consider in rural Alaska is the HIPPY -- Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters. In this program, trained local paraprofessionals visit the homes of parents of 4 and 5 year-olds, delivering appropriate instructional materials, and teaching the role of parents in schooling. Parents agree to engage their children in these activities for 15 minutes a day for 30 weeks a year for two years. The results in Arkansas for the program (which has been extensively employed in Israel) are promising for the children, educators say, and for parents, who often go on to literacy training and GED programs.

Bob Arnold 12/9/88

Summary of presentations made at this committee's hearing in Nome, December 9, 1988.

The hearing was convened at 7:05 p.m. by Chairman Willie Hensley in a meeting room of Northwest College. He explained that other members not present would receive a summary of the presentations made. Soon after the meeting began, Representative-elect Richard Foster joined Senator Hensley at the hearing table.

The hearing was audioconferenced into all villages of the Bering Straits School District.

Tom Briscoe of Wales said that there was a need for improved coordination between the Division of Family and Youth Services and the schools to meet problems of children at risk. He also said the village needed a pre-school program.

Dora Smith of Golovin agreed with the need for pre-schools. She urged assignment of homework to raise achievement levels, and coordination among teachers of different subjects. She also told of health hazards at the school and of the need for a larger facility.

From Teller, Betsy Kakagruk told the committee that schools need to stop promoting students to high grades when they have not mastered learning in the lower grades.

Also from Teller, Gerald Giry said children-at-risk are in every village, and since counselors probably cannot be obtained or afforded, helping networks should be formed in each place.

The assistant superintendent for the school district, Don Evans, told the committee of the growth of the district over the past 12 years (now 1,250 students, 350 employees), and of the program efforts of the district that have produced some increases in the composite scores of students on their tests. He said the district's follow-up studies show large numbers in postsecondary programs, and he hopes the committee will recognize the strengths of rural districts.

From Gambell, Shirley Atogami described a number of local issues that need to be addressed by the district. She said the local community should have a voice in choosing a teacher.

Several local problems were also mentioned by Sally Sepliu of Savoonga. She also called for recognition of the abilities of persons who were long-time teachers' aides, and expressed the hope that arrangements could be made to allow students of the XCEED program to work at the schools.

From Diomede, Eva Mendelook told the committee that the school offered many programs, but there was only a single

psychologist for the entire district and it was not enough, and that classrooms there were too small and there were too few teachers.

Richard Stasenko, a teacher and parent in Shishmaref, said there is a need for more State-sponsored in-service training, drawing upon experienced teachers and aides. He also pointed out that the benefits of travel are too often restricted to athletes, and too little travel is related to academic studies. He said it may be time to consider a state policy on homework.

From Elim, Joe Murray, Jr. told the committee of the need for classroom space and said the Bering Straits School District had changed its priorities following the election; Luther Nagoruk echoed the same complaint and said he believed that every village should have a member on the school board; Frank Savok said the villages have lost the central meeting places of the past in which the young were educated by their elders, and as a result, the children are in the streets. The village needs to own the gymnasium to make it available to them, he said. Tim Genet, school principal, said more resources may be required to meet the many needs.

In Nome, Perry Mendenhall, XCEED instructor at Northwest College, said it was clear that teachers need to ask more of their students in learning; career ladders for those who want to be teachers need to be speeded up; and supplementary programs of school districts need to be academic programs.

Bernadette Alvanna, bilingual teacher, said her concern was that the younger children are to two to three years behind in grade level and that the high schoolers are three to four years behind. She said too much of the reading is culturally irrelevant and that the State should produce readers.

The coordinator for Native programs for the Nome schools, Eileen Norbert, told the committee that too many graduates of the schools are at the 4th or 5th grade reading level, and that 45 percent are two grade levels or more below. She said higher standards are needed. Some of the children have family problems and some are not motivated to attend, she said.

Nome elementary school principal David Newton said stable funding is needed, but money is not the answer to school reform. It needs to be locally based, he said, and supported by the instructional leadership academies.

Richard Miller called for more academic-based travel for the students so that the benefits of such travel would not go only to a school's athletes.

A teacher of special education, Gladys Bibb, said statewide testing is not desirable, but districts need to devise suitable tests to measure progress. She said there has to be consistent and timely funding for schools, and Governor Cowper's proposed endowment should be supported.

A teacher at Nome's alternative high school, Richard Burmeister, told the committee that students shouldn't move out of the early grades without reading at grade level, but they do. He said dropouts could be discovered in those early years. He also said the mandatory attendance law should be enforced, but the courts won't do so.

Janet Tobruk, the president of the Nome PTA, said if the state wants better schools, it can get them. She said stricter certification of teachers is needed and teachers should only teach in their areas of specialization. She also said that the Department of Education should deliver more in-service programs for teachers.

Craig Oleson, a parent, told the committee that there are vast differences between school districts in the state, some pluses and some minuses in each. He applauded the opportunity Nome high schoolers have to obtain college credit through Northwest College.

An instructor at Northwest College, Dan Johnson, said students can be enabled to learn through using the media. He told of his persisting but unsuccessul efforts to obtain the authority to use transmitters owned by the defunct Learn/Alaska network for student produced programs.

Shirley Daniels, director of health services for Kawerak, described the continuing need for fiscal support of the community health aide training program.

Nome vocational education teacher Ken Christiansen told the committee that there is a need to strengthen family life and home economics curricula, and to be concerned about the adequate preparation of students who are not going to college. He said there is too much absenteeism owing to travel of teams to sports events. He urged the committee to support the Rural Students Vocational Program, and to remember that the employability rate is the issue.

Tom Mazzona told of his tutoring work with inmates from the region, persons who were neglected by their parents, persons who cannot read. He said groups need to be formed to work with families. He also said that drug and alcohol education needs to begin in the first years of school.

June Wardell, a Chapter One reading teacher, said what is needed is to make sure children can pass a reading test to get out of the third grade, and to hold teachers accountable if their students cannot do so.

Vera Metcalf of Northwest College told the committee that teachers need to become better informed of innovations in teaching methods, but they also need to experience fewer interruptions in their classroom. Students need to learn college survival schools, she said, pointing out that 80 to 90 percent of the village graduates are still in the villages. She said that unless they are prepared, there will be problems of alcohol and of other kinds. She also said a state language policy is needed and bilingual instructors should be eligible for certification

Senator Hensley concluded the hearing at 10:30 p.m.

Bob Arnold 12/13/88

Summary of presentations made at this committee's hearing in Kotzebue, December 10, 1988.

The hearing was convened at 1:15 p.m. by Chairman Willie Hensley in the NANA museum. He introduced newly elected state representatives Elaine MacLean of Barrow and Richard Foster of Nome, who had accepted his invitation to join him at the hearing table. He thanked the Kotzebue PTA for inviting his panel to hold the hearing and for assisting in making arrangements for it.

The hearing was audioconferenced to villages within the Northwest Arctic School District and broadcast through the facilities of the Barrow public radio station.

From Kiana, teacher Donna Atoruk said test scores were low because the kids hear Inupiaq at home and there is a cultural bias to the tests. She said the kids are doing well, but there is a high turnover in teachers and teachers' expectations need to be raised. She also said that maybe it would have been better to have regional schools. Lee Barr said he would like to have the kids make better progress.

The president of the Kotzebue PTA, May Kenworthy told the panel that obtaining responses from schools requires great persistence, and, each time, the parent making the request is made to feel as though he or she doesn't know what he or she is doing or is ignored. The schools say they welcome parents, but there is so little communication that parents don't know what is going on.

Chukchi college instructor John Creed said the college is offering advanced courses for high school students to allow them to earn college credit. More courses should be offered by distance delivery, but it needs support from principals and teachers in the villages.

Polly Schaeffer told the committee about the bilingual program and the elders who are involved in it. She said there is an injustice in it in that the elders do not have a high school education, but they are expected to take college courses in order to rise on the pay scale.

Pete Schaeffer said the school system generally reflects the low level of education of the parents. He said, further, that he had concerns over the short period of time teachers serve to earn tenure, drug problems, and the early categorization of children leading to expectations that they will fail. He said it was "time to stop treating Native languages as a curiosity, and show we really care about it."

Matt Ganley said his concern is that schools may be shortchanging the young people who want to go on living in the villagek. He said the schools should do more to incorporate local and regional resources in the school programs.

A Kotzebue teacher, Joann Walker, said there were many strengths in the schools, but too much is based on an industrial model while we are in an age of technology. She said parents and teachers need to participate in a rethinking of the school day. In response to a question, she said about half of her 42 eighth graders are at grade level.

A parent who is also a teacher, Carol Suchland, told the committee that reading is being taught in kindergartens, and that it should not be done. Because reading may be too difficult for some, they will be retained; their self-esteem will be lowered; and they will develop a negative attitude toward school.

At Chairman Hensley's request for an update from the Department of Education, Edna MacLean, special assistant to the Commissioner, told of Board of Education efforts to address issues such as youth-at-risk, quality early childhood education, language development in children (and the lack of English-as-a-Second Language training for teachers), culturally relevant curricula, teacher preparation, and the number of minority teachers in the schools. In response to a question, she said that any competitive grant program initiated should require community involvement.

Superintendent Jerry Covey of the Northwest Arctic School District said the testimony he had heard made clear that that schools have many things to do to meet the challenges of the future -- the kids must have their cultural identity, master academic subjects, and have the competence to compete, and the community must feel more nearly part of the school. He said job opportunities in the region require more attention to career education, but the language and history of the region should not be neglected. He said his board has revised its goals, raised academic standards, and increased its performance expectations of both teachers and students.

A parent, Abbe Hensley, told the committee that parent involvement is needed to improve schools, and the involvement must be of a policy kind, an engagement with the issues that determine what a school does and how it does it. She said the fault rests with both the school and the parents: there are teachers who do not advise parents on what is to be learned; and there are parents who do not respond to those opportunities a school affords to have them be a part of the process. She said the State should find a means to motivate all districts to adopt a policy statement on parent involvement.

School administrator Bobbe Bluett said the State needs to have a clear statement of goals that districts would adapt -- after full local participation -- to local needs. She also stressed the need for parental participation in helping schools succeed. In answer to a question, she reported that student attendance was a problem, especially for some

students, and that parents can help in remedying that problem.

High school student Kim Franklin urged the committee to support vocational education and student leadership programs. He said such graduates will not only win jobs and keep them, but they also will have a greater chance of success in higher education.

Bruce Kovarik, a parent, said job opportunities in the region (in government and helping services) require that the local schools provide a sound foundation for students to travel elsewhere to obtain further education and training in order that they can return and fill those jobs in the region. He said if a regional school is needed, funding will have to be made available by the State because education is critical to the people's future.

Reggie Joule, a parent, told the committee that he agrees parental involvement needs to be meaningful. He said parents could teach survival skills to their children, and such learning could be related to class work through writing science or English reports. He said small children's role models are often older children, not adults, and cross-age tutoring -- such as practiced many years ago -- should be more fully employed. The short period devoted to Inupiaq in school, he said, implies that it is unimportant compared to other subjects. Elementary counselors are needed in elementary schools, but they need to be local people the children can be comfortable with, he said. He also said technology should be used to deliver specialized coursework to the small villages.

Pat Peacock, a parent and teacher, said travel away from the region is valuable for learning, but the opportunities are few, except for those engaged in sports.

From Buckland, Nita Thomas said that the school was so crowded that children were studying in the hallway, and that a bigger school is needed.

From Kiana, Jean Gearhart called upon communities to establish parent-teacher organizations as a means of having continuing communication. She also said that all schools within a region should have access to the same educational opportunities.

Senator Hensley thanked all persons appearing at the hearing and adjourned it at 5:15 p.m.

Extracts from "Linking Schools and Universities: Symbiotic Partnerships," by John I. Goodlad, Center for Educational Renewal, University of Washington, 1987, 38 pages.

1. ...the truth is that the steam already has gone out of the top-down school reform effort, the support money has not been forthcoming, and the so-called improvements have been largely around the edges.

2. What we need is a reaffirmation and, probably, a redefinition of the role of education in a democracy...; a much clearer delineation of the desired function of schools in this process; a clear articulation of the goals, substance, length, and breadth of the schooling deemed necessary; and a fresh commitment to both excellence and equity...

3. Two essentials of renewal have been identified. First, the workers -- at all levels -- must have opportunity to infuse their efforts with the expertise of others engaged in similar work.... Second, there must be continuous infusion of both relevant knowledge and alternative (indeed, countervailing) ideas for practice stemming from inquiry into the enterprise.

4. For a school to become renewing, there must be at least a core of teachers and the principal engaged continuously in inquiry about the nature, quality, and relevance of the educational enterprise in which they are engaged; second, there must be time away from daily demands, as in summer workshops...for periods of sustained dialogue and reflection; and third, it is highly desirable and perhaps even necessary for there to be some interpenetration with other cohort groups, alternative drummers, and countervailing ideas on provocative questions.

5. ...just as the culture of the individual school can powerfully resist changes imposed upon it, that same culture can be a potent force for change, given proper conditions... [O]ne of these conditions is a supportive infrastructure that not only encourages the principal and teachers to design the best possible settings for learning and teaching but also provides the necessary resources and supporting mechanisms.

6. ...juxtaposition of the action-oriented culture of the school and the inquiry-oriented culture of the university offers promise of shaking loose the calcified programs of both...

7. In summary, then, the argument for school-university partnerships might proceed somewhat as follows. For schools to get better, they must have better teachers, among other things. To prepare better teachers (and counselors, special educators, and administrators) universities must have access to school settings exhibiting the very best practices. To

assure the best practices, schools must have access to alternative ideas and knowledge... [U]niversities have a stake in and responsibility for school improvement, just as the schools have an interest in and responsibility for the education of those who will staff the schools.

----------Notes and Comments----------

a. From my comments in an earlier memorandum, you already know of my respect for the quality of thought John Goodlad demonstrates and for the restraint and good sense he shows in prescribing remedies for problems of schooling in America. Instead of recommending actions that allow a totting up of how states are doing (like increasing the number of Carnegie units required for graduation), he urges that <u>processes</u> be inaugurated that will help schools succeed in what they are trying to do.

b. In testimony before our committee in its Juneau hearing, Education Commissioner William Demmert told us, among other things, of the collaboration between the Department of Education and the University of Alaska in sponsoring leadership academies and in other activities, and urged an expanded role for the University in issues of schooling.

c. What follows (and are attached) is of the same importance as what Goodlad and Demmert have said. These are descriptions of the kind of specific roles that the University of Alaska could perform in contributing to school improvement.

1) From the Fairbanks campus, a proposal to engage school principals, pivotal figures in effective schools, in action-research projects founded upon the research base. The authors, Judy Kleinfeld and David Hagstrom, are or recently have been directly engaged in public schooling, as well as being members of the university faculty.

2) From the Anchorage campus, identification of multiple tasks that it can undertake to help schools succeed, including cooperating with schools in self assessment and planning, and inviting schools to join in the evaluation of the university's teacher preparation program. Its author, Marilyn Buckley, is an activist for improved schooling practices, especially in language arts, and works with many districts.

3) From the Juneau campus, a portrayal of how education students can learn in the small communities and, at the same time, contribute to school improvement. Its author, Paul Berg, teaches multi-cultural education at the university and is a coordinator of computer programs for the Juneau School District.

Bob Arnold 12/20/88

STRENGTHENING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN RURAL SCHOOLS: A SCHOOL-BASED CHANGE MODEL

Judith Kleinfeld and David Hagstrom

OVERVIEW

The underlying intent of this proposal is to support local collaborative school-based reform. Working with the principals who are members of Alaska's Rural Schools Leadership Network, the University of Alaska Fairbanks will encourage local school efforts to bring about change and will provide technical assistance. Through this proposal, the university will demonstrate its support of school-based management and will encourage model collaborative action research projects within the schools of rural Alaska. Through this proposal, the University will acknowledge that top down school reform is not an appropriate change model in Alaska. Through this proposal, the University of Alaska Fairbanks will strongly indicate its desire to establish university-school partnerships across the state of Alaska. Through this new partnership, the University and the schools can bring improved schooling to rural Alaska.

NEED

Alaska's assessment report on school performance and the Senate Subcommittee Hearings demonstrate the urgent need to strengthen Alaska's rural schools. Despite the vast sums of money Alaska pours into education, achievement in rural schools remains low.

The important issue is to locate a strategic pressure point. What approach -- realistically -- would make a substantial difference to rural schools? In a period of declining oil revenues, what leverage could we gain at modest cost?

We argue that the development of rural principals -- providing principals with the opportunity to work with their staff and community on a reform effort -- offers exactly such a strategic pressure point.

National research on effective schools with minority children demonstrates the enormous importance of the school principal. School achievement rises, studies show, when principals become "instructional leaders" -- when they create a public vision of what schools can become, use educational research to improve reading and other academic skills, and develop a school climate that supports high standards and expectations.

In rural Alaska, the principal occupies an even more pivotal role. The principal works at the delicate interface between the rural community and the school. Principals in rural communities must use schools to fulfill cultural, as well as academic, demands. As the Senate Subcommittee Hearings show, rural communities have two fundamental concerns:

- Strengthening academic education, and also
- Strengthening students' cultural identity

These directions are not incompatible. Fine principals can show communities how to use schools to fulfill both needs well.

This proposal seeks to use university programs and network already in place to develop rural principals who can:

1. Build trust between rural communities and schools and initiate collborative change efforts
2. Use educational research to improve students' academic skills, and
3. Help communities use schools to sustain students' Native identity.

The Role of the University of Alaska Fairbanks in the Professional Development of Rural Principals and Local School-Based Change

The University of Alaska Fairbanks is strategically situated to help develop rural principals' skills, provide technical assistance, and support school-based change. It is the central institution which educates and certifies rural principals. Each summer approximately 50 rural teachers come to the university campus to study in graduate programs leading to administrative certification. The University has developed a special program for Native teachers seeking to become administrators. The University has developed a rural principals' network with over 70 active members.

An investment in the professional development of principals can to have far-reaching, long-term influence on many rural schools. Most of these principals are committed to rural Alaska; many are married into the community. Rural principals move between communities and sometimes between school districts. Thus, the knowledge and skills developed in these principals will contribute to the strength of many different rural school sites.

This proposal seeks support to:

1. *Provide technical assistance and support to rural principals engaged in local school-based change.*

   The university will help inform principals of what has been done elsewhere in the United States and serve as a catalyst for principals to think through how to approach school reform in their communities.

2. *Engage rural principals in action-research projects aimed at positive educational change in both the academic and cultural areas.*

   The record of these various reform efforts will also be important. We will produce a "case literature" similar to the case approach at Harvard Business School that will help us understand how positive change does and does not occur in rural schools.

3. *Bring visiting scholars, principals, and other educators of the highest caliber to the University of Alaska Fairbanks to work with rural principals and prospective principals in university summer programs to think through cooperative community/school reform efforts.*

   These visiting educators will help principals learn about and apply to rural school the growing research base on how to improve reading comprehension and mathematical and scientific knowledge. These visiting educators will help principals learn how schools can strengthen students' cultural identity.

4. *Create a supportive network of rural principals which sustains efforts to improve rural schools during the academic year.*

   To lessen isolation and support change efforts, the rural principals will work on school reform efforts with the support of 1) distance-delivered coursework on educational change taught by national and Alaska experts and 2) a professional colleague group consisting of other rural principals enrolled in this coursework.

PROJECT DIRECTION AND RESOURCES

Both Professors Judith Kleinfeld and David Hagstrom are willing to commit themselves to this project with the policy guidance of the Rural Principals Network. Both have done extensive research on effective rural Alaska schools and effective rural teachers. Judith Kleinfeld heads the Department of Education, Fairbanks Faculty at the University of Alaska and will be helpful in securing long-term institutional support for the project. David Hagstrom developed and co-ordinates the Rural Principal Network. He has recently assumed leadership of the administrative graduate program and will thus assure the long-term institutionalization of this project.

This project will require three years of support--an initial year for project development and two years for certifying the first wave of new rural Alaska principals. After the first three years, the project will evolve into a standard university program supported by university funds--as has already happened with the "Teachers for Alaska" program. Since this is a concept paper, rather than a fully developed proposal, we have not as yet worked out detailed costs. We estimate costs in the $75,000-$100,000 a year range.

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA, ANCHORAGE
3211 Providence Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99508

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

December 15, 1988

Senator Willam L. Hensley
Mr. Robert Arnold
Alaska State Senate
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Hensley and Mr. Arnold:

Thank you for inviting me to testify to the Senate Special Committee on School Performance.

I believe I speak for most educators throughout Alaska when i applaud the efforts of the Committee in providing public forums for interested individuals and groups to express their ideas on how best to improve the education of all Alaska students, and in particular native and other minority students.

Now that the hearings are completed, I hope the Committee will advance to the next step of initiating proposals for bold and imaginative plans for school improvement. Such plans, it is important to remember, must marshall the energies of all those who care deeply about the quality of public education. The University of Alaska is certainly a member of this group. I speak with particular confidence because of the new administration at the University of Alaska Anchorage. This September a new dean, Dr. Michael Carl, assumed leadership of the School of Education. Dean Carl has both vision and practicality. It is my evaluation that he sincerely wants to be an agent of positive, constructive change. Michael Carl spent two days at the hearings on August 26 and 27 and has talked with the faculty about the Committee and its work.

Were Dean Carl without administrative support for his objectives, I would not be optimistic that he could effect change. One person's efforts, no matter how noble, are easily frustrated without larger endorsement. The new central administration, Chancellor Donald Behrend and Vice Chancellor Beverly Beeton, are - in my opinion - sincerely supportive of the School of Education's goal of actively participating in public school reform.

I invite your Committee to meet with Dean Carl and the faculty to explore the possible ways the School of Education could be of assistance. A few ideas immediately come to mind.

1. The School of Education in consultation with Chancellor Behrend and Vice Chancellor Beeton could establish interdisciplinary teams of faculty and students who are interested in a particular problem. The problem maybe establishing early childhood programs, or programs involving parents in education, or new curriculum and instructional techniques, and so forth.

2. After school/community groups decide they want to assess their schools, a university team would join them and collaboratively engage in all phases of problem solving.

3. Since the University of Alaska Anchorage has primary responsibility for school districts in Southcentral Alaska, the School of Education could provide technical assistance for short and log term planning to some of these districts.

4. Special summer school programs could be developed for teachers and administrators who are engaged in change.

5. New plans could be established which more aggressively recruit and assist minority students in the elementary and secondary certification programs.

6. Evaluation of existing teacher education programs could take place for critical analysis of whether existing preparation is doing all it can do to prepare new teachers who will vigorously help resolve the porblem of low achievement in native and minority students. This evaluation must include public school teachers and administrators.

Many ideas, as you know, are possible. The important thing and the purpose of this letter is to encourage your continuing efforts in school improvement and for you to know that the University is ready to help.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Hanf Buckley

Marilyn Hanf Buckley, Ph.D
Associate Professor

cc: Dean Carl
Vice Chancellor Beeton
Chancellor Behrend

MHB/ld

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA SOUTHEAST
School of Education, Liberal Arts and Science

11120 Glacier Highway • Juneau, Alaska 99801

December 14, 1988

Senator William Hensley
P.O. Box V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Hensley:

Bob Arnold asked me to contact you concerning one of the courses that I teach at the University of Alaska Southeast and describe some of the activities that we are doing with rural Alaskan education. Bob indicated that this may be of some interest to the Special Committee on School Performance.

The course, Multicultural Education, was begun by Bill Demmert. When he left to become Commissioner of Education, he asked me to take over and to continue developing the course. The purpose of the course is to help prepare UAS education students for teaching in rural Alaska schools.

This year we have added a field practicum to the course. Students travel in groups to village schools to observe, talk with students, parents and staff and to present special lessons and activities which the local staff do not have the time nor resources to prepare. Presentations that UAS students have conducted have ranged from special art projects for elementary students to a seminar on AIDS for high school students. The schools that we have worked with have indicated a desire to establish a long term relationship with the University.

The University of Alaska Southeast can serve as an active educational resource for rural communities. In addition to providing special educational presentations and information, university staff and students can support local efforts to overcome educational problems.

For example, in one of the communities that we visited, teachers and the community are working to increase the high school graduation rate. Presently, the majority of students drop out before graduation. Investigation of the causes revealed that there are about twelve factors contributing to the low graduation rate.

I propose that university staff and students work with village educators and communities to identify educational problems such as this, analyze the causes and work with the communities to bring about solutions. I also suggest that as part of this process the university publish case studies of community based problem solving in written and video format.

There are several benefits to this proposal. First, we will help bring about positive educational change in several communities each year. Second, we will be publishing and sharing information about community based education problem solving with educators around the state. Third, the future teachers that we are training will have practical experience in educational problem solving. Fourth, we are increasing the awareness of the university in the minds of the parents and students in the communities.

During my tenure as a teacher in rural Alaska and university instructor, I have found that the specific causes for educational problems differ from community to community. One solution will not fit the state nor even a region. Problems and solutions appear to be community specific. A further complication is that within a community, an identifiable educational problem may be the result of several interacting factors.

I am also convinced that solutions to educational problems must come from within the communities themselves. Teachers, administrators and state agencies can serve as catalysts and resources for successful change, but the solutions and commitment must be community based.

This letter is not a proposal. Rather, it is a description of how change can be produced and the kinds of change that can take place. If we had $25,000 seed money available for travel, materials and publishing next year, we could begin working with communities on a much larger scale.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this information.

Sincerely,

Paul Berg

Paul Berg
Visiting Assistant Professor of Education

cc: Marshall Lind, Chancellor
John Pugh, Dean
Education, Liberal Arts & Science